HUMAN FREEDOM IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

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(THESIS SUBMITTED FOR PhD, UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW,
DEPT. OF PHILOSOPHY, SEPT., 1994)

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ABSTRACT

I here examine Sartre's philosophy, as it has developed from his early works to his later works, as providing us with a view of the human being as a "freedom."

In Part 1, I examine Sartre's view in Being and Nothingness of the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent or ontological freedom.

In Part 2, I examine Sartre's Psychology of the Imagination and Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions as concrete applications of the Being and Nothingness approach.

In Part 3, I examine how Sartre in Search for a Method situates the human being in society but retains his perspective of freedom.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the help I received from my supervisors at the University of Glasgow. Above all, I must acknowledge the assistance of my first supervisor, the late Professor Eva Schaper who is greatly missed.

I must also acknowledge the two other supervisors I had the privilege to work with. Mary Haight gave me valuable advice and encouragement which was much appreciated. Thanks also to David Campbell for his occasional help.

I would also like to acknowledge the inspiration I gained from the Social Theory programme at Paisley College, as it then was, and in particular from the Philosophy lecturer, Ted Ninnes.

KEY

BN - BEING AND NOTHINGNESS

PI - THE PSYCHOLOGY OF IMAGINATION

THE SKETCH - SKETCH FOR A THEORY OF THE EMOTIONS

SM - SEARCH FOR A METHOD

INTRODUCTION: BEING-IN-QUESTION

Speaking etymologically, philosophy is basically defined as "the pursuit or love of wisdom." Naturally enough, though, much attention has been paid throughout the history of philosophy to the question of what exactly is to count as this wisdom and to how it is to be attained. However, the pursuit of wisdom not only refers us to the object of the pursuit - knowledge - and to things, events and facts outside us but also to the pursuer, the human being engaged in this pursuit. As Sartre often puts it (as Heidegger before him), the human being is "the being whose being is in question in its being."[1] Also naturally enough, then, throughout the history of philosophy various attempts have been made to answer the question of what the human being is. This question is of prime importance, since if at the start we make false assumptions about what the human being is, all our subsequent inquiries into human affairs will be contaminated with error. However, if we examine the direction in which modern philosophy has developed, it could be argued that today the way we answer this question stands in need of re-examination.

Descartes is often described as the "father" of modern philosophy. Central to his philosophy is his dictum "Cogito ergo sum" or "I think therefore I am."[2] Under Descartes' conception of the human being, one exists indubitably for oneself as a thinking thing or soul. At the beginning of the modern tradition, then, we find the mind or consciousness treated as a sui generis object of study and as the foundation of knowledge.

What may seem advantageous about Descartes' philosophy is that it attempts to allow for our experience of ourselves as conscious human beings who are capable of thought, emotion, intentions and so on rather than being mindless automata. However, his attempt to do this by identifying consciousness with a separate mental substance entirely distinct from anything in the physical realm leaves him with a great problem. We are presented with a dualism of mind and body and it is difficult to conceive how these two substances of distinct natures can be united in the human being.

One strategy to avoid this problem is to deny the existence of a separate mental substance and explain everything in terms of the physical. Such is the strategy of a prominent school of thought in philosophy today which adheres to Central-state Materialism[3] in which the mind or consciousness is identified as being nothing more than the central nervous system (or, more simply, the brain) of the human body. So as we near the end of the twentieth century, we can see that philosophy has travelled far from Descartes to a point where many philosophers accord no special status to the mind or consciousness but, on the contrary, see it as part of the physical world.

Central-state Materialism - as propounded by one of its major advocates, D.M. Armstrong, in his book, A Materialist Theory of the Mind[4] - accepts as probably true the hypothesis from neurophysiology that "the mind is nothing more than the brain,"[5] i.e. that there is nothing more to the mind than the physical brain or, more accurately, the central nervous

system. Hence the title of "Central-state Materialism" attached to this view. The proof of the hypothesis, Armstrong says, must come from science, particularly neurophysiology. All he wishes to attempt is:

> "to show that there are no good philosophical reasons for denying that mental processes are purely physical processes in the central nervous system and so, by implication, that there are no good philosophical reasons for denying that man is nothing but a material object."[6]

Armstrong identifies the mental state as being "a state of the person apt for bringing about a certain sort of behaviour."[7] This state is in turn identified with a purely physical state of that person's brain. It is the state of the brain which causes the behaviour, and this causality is of no special mental type: "causality in the mental sphere," Armstrong says, "is no different from causality in the physical sphere."[8]

Armstrong treats perception, imagination, will, intention and any other such "mental" phenomena in Rylean fashion as being dispositions to behave in certain sorts of ways. The difference between him and Ryle, he points out, is that he (Armstrong) does not stop at identifying a disposition but goes on to characterize that disposition as caused by a physical state of the brain.[9] Thus perception is described as a disposition to behave in a discriminatory fashion towards objects if impelled to do so.

Having explained his physicalist thesis, Armstrong gives us his Central-state Materialist conclusion about the pursuer of knowledge:

> "The knower differs from the world he knows only in the greater complexity of his physical organisation. Man is one with nature." [10]

The mind is simply the brain, a material object, albeit a highly complex one, and "mental" operations are simply the complex physical occurrences in this material object.

Under Central-state Materialism, then, the human being's behaviour is determined according to the physical laws of the operation of the brain. Such an approach would easily be capable of incorporating other notions of psychological determinism such as Skinner's Behaviourism. Skinner said that the environment affected the human being and the latter gave a determined response, the behaviour, with no intervening mind or consciousness.[11] Central-state Materialism posits the physical brain as that which is affected and gives the determined response.[12]

Central-state Materialism could also find its parallel in determinist views of <u>social</u> theory such as, for example, that of Althusser.[13] Just as in Central-state Materialism there is no special mental being, so in Althusser's analysis of social structure, the human being is not a free subject. For Althusser, people, groups and events are merely embodiments of the social structure. Humanism is an illusion. Through ideology, the individual person believes that he or she is a subject. But the truth, according to Althusser, is that he

or she is only reflecting the social structure.[14] Central-state Materialism, then, can be seen as part of a wider trend that exists in the "human" disciplines towards deterministic explanations.

I have presented Central-state Materialism as an attempt at explaining what the human being is without positing the existence of any mysterious ethereal "mental" substance which we will then find difficult to attach to the physical. However, it could be argued that an examination of the consequences of a rigorous application of the Central-state Materialist approach to the human being brings to light, in its turn, a fundamental problem of its own for this approach.

Whether this reflection is ultimately shown to have a basis in truth or in illusion, whatever explanation may eventually account for it, on reflecting on the question of what the human being is, I can initially point to my experience of myself as a thinking, feeling, intending and purposively acting human being. I experience myself as being more than just any other material object. I experience myself, rather, as "central;" that is, I have experiences which are "my" experiences, the world is centred around me as the subject experiencing it. I experience myself as being in some way above and beyond the muteness of physical objects and physical occurrences. Even, for example, the simple perception of a tree is intimately an experience "for me." I experience myself as not just being part of the world but also as being a point of view on the world and I react to other people as being of the same nature. The things and

events of the world "mean" something to the human being and this is carried even to the extent that we have complex emotions about our situation in the world, we formulate abstract concepts about the world, we can create and be receptive to works of fiction and so on. In summary, on reflecting on our experience, it appears to us - however this is to be explained - that the human being is not bogged down in the physical world but, as a centre of experience, inhabits what we could call a "realm of meaning."

Central-state Materialism would view the terms in which I have just described our experience as imprecise and would view this experience as able to be accounted for by the natural sciences. For Armstrong, the mind <u>is</u> the central nervous system and mental processes <u>are</u> physical processes in the central nervous system and both the system and the processes are governed by physical laws. Under this view, the "mental," "conscious," or "spiritual" aspect of the human being is accounted for in terms of the great complexity of the human being as a material object. The central nervous system of the human body is highly complex and, still operating under physical laws, can be stimulated by the environment and respond to this stimulation in complex ways. There is nothing more to the mind than this.

However, if we consistently carry out this reduction of the mental to the physical some very serious consequences ensue. If our intentions, feelings, concepts and so on are said to <u>be</u> in fact, purely physical states of the brain then a case can be argued that there is a sense in which the intentions,

feelings and concepts are lost as intentions, feelings and concepts and that we are plunged into a meaningless muteness from which we can never escape.

Let us take an example. I have a concept of world peace and I believe this is a cause I should work for. I therefore join the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and take part in a demonstration outside a nuclear weapons establishment. Under Armstrong's Central-state Materialism, my concept of world peace, my beliefs about it and my intention to take part in CND's activities in reality are physical states of my brain, a certain arrangement of neurons firing, for instance. Remember that Armstrong has said that mental causality is no different from physical causality. So no matter how breathtakingly complex the whole process is, what happens under this view is that events in the outside world, themselves physical, stimulate my physical brain which responds according to physical laws determining me to engage in certain activities which are themselves, again, purely physical events. There is a system of physical events causing other physical events. My concept, beliefs and intentions are lost as concept, beliefs and intention in any distinct sense. If they are simply physical states of a material object determining other physical events then it might just as well be the case that in response to stimulation from the environment I am caused to make a complex arrangement of chattering noises with my teeth and wave my arms in another complex arrangement. There would be no qualitative difference between being determined to enact that physical behaviour and being determined to take part in

the demonstration. Neither would there be any qualitative difference between being determined to enact the complex teeth-chattering and hand-waving arrangement and, to take another example, giving a rendition of the old Scottish song, "MacPherson's Fareweel."

Seen from this perspective, we are plunged into a complete muteness and undifferentiation. One's knowledge that Central-state Materialism is the truth about the human being would itself be a causally determined physical state of the brain, the replacement of which by another physical state would make no qualitative difference. There would be no experiencing centre or subject as described in my initial reflection, there would be only physical objects of certain physical states and subject to certain physical events. However, with no experiencing centre there to observe this, even this differentiation would not be known as such. A complete muteness and undifferentiation would hold sway. Seen from this point of view, then, one could say that the human being is not just <u>one</u> with nature but <u>submerged in</u> nature so that there is not even anyone there to know that there is nature. In this sense there would be no meaning. Central-state Materialism, viewed from this angle, would be a <u>reductio ad absurdum</u> since if it were correct there would not in any meaningful sense be such a thing as correctness.

Could there be a way out of this conundrum by simply saying that there is no problem in admitting that only the physical exists? Could we not view the human being in a similar way as we would, for example, the chess-playing computer? It is

purely a complex material object operating under physical laws but it can play a meaningful game of chess and, while we know that there is an ultimate physical explanation, we can loosely talk of it as intending to make such and such a move in an attempt to win the game, etc. We would loosely talk of the human being in terms of an experiencing subject for ease of language but know that Central-state Materialism is the ultimate explanation.

The answer, I believe, is that this would not give us a way out. The chess-playing computer is only a material object performing physical operations according to physical laws and is totally oblivious to the meaning attributed to it, that it is playing chess. Only an experiencing centre witnessing the computer could rise above the pure occurrence in total ignorance of physical events to see the computer as "playing chess" and loosely employ ideas that it was intending, and so on. But if the human being is similarly only a complex material object then this loose employment of ideas is itself only a physical occurrence and we are back at square one.

If my reasoning is correct, then, Central-state Materialism leaves us in meaningless undifferentiation. The same would apply to psychological and social determinism since I would again not be a centre of reference or subject but a thing operating under deterministic laws so that there would be no-one there to hold the theories in any meaningful sense.

Central-state Materialism and determinist theories of the human being in general, then, can be seen to have a

debilitating consequence pulling away the foundation from underneath them. However, just because the consequence of Central-state Materialism is dire does not mean that the theory itself is wrong. Might it not be the case that we simply have to accept it?

But here it could be argued that we meet with another problem for Central-state Materialism. We encounter a great discrepancy between, on the one side, the theory and its consequence and, on the other side, our experience. Even if it is logically possible to construct a theory explaining human behaviour in terms of the human being as purely a (complex) physical object, I can still point to my experience of inhabiting a realm of meaning. I experience my concept <u>as a concept</u> and the song <u>as a song</u>, as within the realm of meaning, and I cannot conceive how they can <u>be</u> mere physical states of my brain. My knowledge of the song seems entirely different to me from a brain neuron firing.[15] I cannot conceive how I am submerged in the muteness of the physical; whatever the Central-state Materialist theory says, I can still point to my experience of myself as an experiencing centre or subject inhabiting a realm of meaning. A lacuna is left in our understanding of what the human being is. Similarly, theories of psychological and social determinism still leave me with my experience of being more than a thing causally affected by psychological and social factors.

At the end of this discussion it would seem that there is at least good philosophical ground for questioning the notion that the human being is explained by physical or

psychological or social determinism and for attempting to find an alternative way of explaining what the human being is. What I wish to arrive at is a way of understanding the human being such that I can allow for my experience of being conscious without reducing this consciousness to something else while at the same time not simply going back to Descartes but accounting for the relationship of consciousness to the body and to the environment or society.

In this work, I will attempt to show how the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, as it has developed from his early works to his later works, can furnish us with such an understanding of the human being. In contrast to determinist views, Sartre's is an approach which centres around freedom. The human being is characterized as being a "freedom" in the fundamental sense of not simply being a material object but being a conscious experiencing "for-itself," freed from the muteness of physical objects. Sartre in the course of his philosophical development investigates this freedom in its situation as a bodily human being in the world and as in a world which is social.

In Part 1, "The Freedom of the For-itself," I explore Sartre's Being and Nothingness[16] (hereafter referred to as BN) and try to show how this work provides us with an initial foundation to allow us to study the human being within a realm of meaning rather than of muteness. This is by means of his conception of the human being as an ontological freedom or "for-itself," an embodied consciousness distinct in nature from the purely physical. However, I argue that BN

does not fully address the relationship of the for-itself to the constraining society in which it lives. Nonetheless, though, I further argue that this does not detract from the truth of his basic view of human consciousness.

In Part 2, "The Freedom of the For-itself Applied," I explore The Psychology of Imagination[17] of Sartre and his Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions.[18] I try to show that, although they were written before BN, they can retrospectively be interpreted as applications in concrete areas of the approach to consciousness already begun in the earlier works but more fully developed in BN. I try to show how they supplement BN by providing examples of consciousness in operation.

In Part 3, "The Freedom of the For-itself Situated and Engaged," I shall explore Sartre's more socially concerned later work, Search for a Method.[19] I try to show that he here rectifies his neglect of the full weight of social constraints by his examination of the human being as living in a social situation, while at the same time preserving his non-deterministic view of human consciousness as in BN. So much so that Sartre places hope in the transformation of society by the activity of human beings. But it is to the ontological freedom of the for-itself in BN that I now turn.

PART 1: THE FREEDOM OF THE FOR-ITSELF

CHAPTER 1: THE CONSCIOUS HUMAN BEING AND THE WORLD

1.1 THE PROBLEM

In my introduction I attempted to show, focusing on the example of Armstrong's Central-state Materialism, that physical determinist theories of the human being suffer a twofold deficiency. Firstly, the determinist theory, according to its own principles, must itself be determined in the theorist. The theory is then no longer meaningfully a theory for it is merely the determined product of another determined product. No experiencing subject exists to hold the theory meaningfully as a theory. Secondly, this result of determinism can be counterpoised by our experience of ourselves as, on the contrary, being indeed experiencing subjects and not merely determined things.[1] I then pointed to the possibility of trying to develop a non-determinist approach to the study of the human being which would allow us to accept our experience of ourselves as subjects without, however, lapsing back into the Cartesian difficulty of positing the existence of a mysterious spiritual entity inhabiting the physical body. I hoped to find such an approach in the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre.

Such an approach, however, if it is to have any validity, cannot rest at vaguely pointing to some aspect of human experience. Whether we attempt a physical determinist approach or an alternative approach, we are confronted with a multifaceted problem: the human being as a physical body situated in and dependent on the physical world while at the same time having "consciousness" of itself in this situation

and the ability to act on the world. I attempted in the introduction to show that physical determinism cannot adequately account for the "consciousness" facet of this problem and that the theory consequently collapses. But now I in turn, in my attempt to study the human being without reducing consciousness, will have to try to account for how this consciousness is related to the physical body and to the material world or, in short, for the relation of the conscious human being and the world. Otherwise my approach would lack a proper foundation and would lay itself open to being treated as a superficial description capable of re-integration into a determinist theory.

In this chapter, I will try to show how an adequate solution to this problem can be found in Sartre's BN. I will be trying to show how we can extract from BN an answer to the question of what in a basic sense the human being is if he or she is not simply a material object. Firstly, however, it may be useful to put the question in a historical perspective to highlight some of the difficulties Sartre has to deal with. Obviously I cannot tackle every philosopher who has ever said anything on this issue. (We could easily, for example, go back to Plato in The Republic[2] where the everyday world of the senses was the secondary reality and the objects in it were taken as such only through their participation in the ideal "Forms.") I shall, rather, take a few examples from the era of modern philosophy which present the perennial problems.

1.2 THE PROBLEM IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In one's natural experience prior to philosophical reflection, one takes oneself for granted as a bodily person with a "mind" and confronting the "external" world "out there," outside oneself. Philosophy, however, has had the greatest difficulty in explaining this. Descartes,[3] for example, notes that through the senses we believe in an external world. However, the method of radical doubt throws this into question. We are then left with the order of the world only, the way it appears to us through the senses, for we do not really know if there is a world outside the senses. Only afterwards, with the proof of God's existence and of his perfection hence non-deceptiveness do we gain the assurance that there is an external world as we believed.

With his "cogito" argument, Descartes wants to show that we have intuitive certainty of our own existence.[4] But this existence is in the first instance purely as a "thinking thing," a disembodied mind or soul.[5] Proof of the existence of one's body only comes afterwards (as in the case of the external world) with the proof of God's non-deceptiveness.[6] Having set up a dualism of mind and body, Descartes then has great difficulty in re-uniting the two. How does a spiritual substance unite with a material substance?

In Locke's empiricism[7] our immediate objects are the "ideas" we gain through the senses of the external world of "matter." Matter is a "supposed I know not what"[8] outside of us (created by God) which causes the ideas we have of objects. This was his representative theory of perception. Of course, Berkeley[9] is able immediately to make the criticism that if

we are true to the empiricist principle that all our knowledge has to come from experience then we have no justification for postulating the existence of outside matter. How can we know that there is such a thing?

Locke also tackles the problem of the order of the world with his distinction between simple and complex ideas. However, there is a good deal of ambiguity here. The mind, he says, is like white paper[10] or a dark room[11] which is passively furnished with simple ideas from the senses. Yet our perception of an object as a whole object is said to be an activity of the mind by which it forms complex ideas out of the separate simple ideas of the colour, hardness, smell etc. of the object.[12] But are the ideas we have anything other than complex (if we accept his notion of ideas)? Are there such things as these simple sensations? Of what nature is the mind that it combines these passive and active elements?

Berkeley, as I have said, rejected the postulate of "matter" outside our experience. For him, our only objects are our ideas (which term, according to Locke's usage, includes not just thoughts in the usual sense but also perceptions, sensations etc.) The appearance of the world to us, the spirits or beings who have ideas, is the world for Berkeley. It is quite sufficient to accept that world with no need for the unjustifiable postulate of an outside world of "matter."

However, Berkeley is well aware of a great problem his immaterialism or idealism has to cope with. This is the experience we have - however it is to be accounted for - that

the things "out there" do not appear and disappear by fiat of our wills. For example, the burning heat of the sun is there making me feel uncomfortable and I cannot wish it away. In my experience I also find that these things appear to other people too and not just me. Berkeley's detailed way of coping with this is to divide spirits into the finite ones like you and me and the infinite spirit, God. It is God who has continuously the ideas of the sun, the world with its objects and so on and who communicates these ideas to us. This, for Berkeley, caters for the "resistance," if we may call it that, of things. Berkeley pursues this down to natural science's discovery of laws of nature and so on. The conformity of the universe to laws or a determinism in its operations is part of the benevolence of the infinite spirit in communicating to us an ordered system of ideas (with the occasional exception of miracles). If God communicated any old ideas to us in bizarre, orderless fashion, we would not be able to learn anything or operate in a coherent way in the world. This even explains, according to Berkeley, why God allows such apparently nasty things as destructive earthquakes and so on to occur. God cannot continually intervene to stop such things lest we no longer have an ordered system of ideas. The system of ideas adequately supplies us with a world with no need for an outside "matter."

But, we may enquire of Berkeley, is it not true that we no more directly in our experience encounter God than we do Locke's matter? Berkeley does try to account for this by saying that we have a "notion" of God through His effects,

the object-ideas in the world, His creations. But it could still be argued that this "God" is still only a hypothesis and is not directly experienced so that if the postulate of matter is unjustifiable, so then is that of Berkeley's God.

Hume,[13] following on from Locke and Berkeley, takes empiricism to its ultimate conclusion. He "goes the whole hog" by concluding that although we may naturally think there is an external world, there is no justification for this. For all we directly have are the "impressions" we get from the senses and the derivative "ideas."[14] Hume is a sort of "matter-less" Locke or "God-less Berkeley." There is no justification for positing anything outside impressions and ideas - be it matter or God, or even, indeed, one's "self" for all one can observe at any one time is a particular idea or impression. Reality becomes reduced to bundles of perceptions.

The problem here, it could be argued, is that it is being attempted to make an observation of experience restricted solely to the immediately present so that we are left with a succession of separate impressions and ideas. But should not our experience of ourselves as unified persons across time in what seems to us a cohesive world also be taken into account? Hamlyn describes Hume's theory as a <u>reductio ad absurdum</u>[15] in which the apparatus of a representative theory of perception is given - the impressions and ideas - but in which nothing is there for the latter to represent.[16] Also, what is the meaning of an impression, idea or perception with no-one to have them?

In more modern times A.J. Ayer and the sense-data theorists have carried on this "God-less Berkeley" tradition. For Ayer, our statements and objects could be reduced to statements about sense-data with no concern for anything outside the sense-data.[17] For example, to say that if I go round to the other side of the house I will see that side is simply to say that if I make such and such a movement, I will get such and such sense-data. However, Ayer himself, with honesty admitted later in his career that reduction of everyday objects to sense-data was not satisfactory. It does not seem to do justice to the way objects appear to us in our experience at any rate as cohesive objects, "solid," unified things.

As distinct from Hume with his bare, present impressions, Kant[18] looks at the experience of oneself as a subject and then attempts to construct the way such an experience is possible. This results in Kant's categories by which the subject orders his or her experience.

Here again we have the issue of how the world is ordered. Kant places the ordering task in the human subject. However, a question mark arises over that which the subject is ordering. For Kant distinguishes between the phenomenal world, the world as it appears to us, and the noumenal world, the world as it is in itself which is unknowable. How, then, we may ask, do we know that there is a noumenon and what is its relationship to the world as it appears to us?

Another question arises about the categories and how they are operated. In more modern times again, Merleau-Ponty, to take our final philosophical example, often refers to the Kantian tradition as "intellectualism."[19] We need to know how the human being has an ordered experience of the world in a spontaneous fashion without an effort of intellectual performance. E.g. perception of an object as a whole lamp immediately as such without any explicit "working out" of what it is, even though I see only part of it, from a distance, in perspective etc.[20]

The common thread throughout all these examples is the problem of how philosophy is to account for the experience of the human being with its mind and body and confronting an "external" world. We are presented with a whole variety of answers ranging from realist to idealist positions. Mental realism in which the mind really exists as a distinct mental entity. Material realism in which there is a solid, independent material reality or universe out there. Idealism in which the world <u>is</u> ideas, combined sometimes with mental realism (e.g.Berkeley's spirits) and sometimes left to its own devices (e.g. Hume's bundles of perceptions). We could also see Central-state Materialism, which we looked at earlier, as a kind of supreme physical realism.

In this chapter on the conscious human being and the world, I want to attempt to show how Sartre offers us a balanced approach, giving us a way through the perplexities of idealism and realism. This is a balance which attempts to cater for our own contribution to the "reality" we experience

and for that feature of reality which means that it is there bumping up against me regardless of my whim, its "coefficient of adversity,"[21] as Sartre puts it at one point. It is also a balance in which the human being is seen as a unified conscious bodily being so that we are neither presented with a view of the human being as a purely physical thing nor with a view of the human being as possessed of a mysterious spiritual substance.

1.3 OVERVIEW OF SARTRE'S APPROACH

Let me first of all give a brief overview of Sartre's approach in BN to the question of what the human being and the world are. To start from the very beginning, Sartre gives to his massive work the subtitle "An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology." Thus Sartre places himself within the phenomenological movement of philosophy[22] begun by Edmund Husserl around the beginning of this century, a movement pledged to describe "the things themselves" or the phenomena as we find them in our experience. Of course, as ever in philosophy, the various phenomenologists have come up with their own varying descriptions of what the phenomena are and of how phenomenology should be carried out, with for example, the founder Husserl, concentrating on how things appear to or are even constituted by the consciousness of the human being whereas his erstwhile pupil, Heidegger, focuses on the phenomenon of "Being" with the human being primarily directly engaged in it rather than contemplating it. The history of phenomenology, however, and where Sartre fits in, though an interesting area of study itself, will not be my main concern here. Primarily I wish to attempt to give a

practical study of Sartre's philosophy, using it as a tool to examine the human being, and hopefully what Sartre's phenomenology is will shine through in the process.

To get back to my overview, Sartre defines his phenomenological ontology as "the description of the phenomenon of being as it manifests itself; that is, without intermediary."[23] As he describes it being is divided into two different regions: "being-in-itself," the mute existence of things in themselves, and "being-for-itself," the conscious being of the human. Being-in-itself is the non-conscious plenitude of existence independent of the human being or for-itself. However, being-in-itself simply <u>is</u> and there is nothing more that can be said of being as it is in itself. It is the for-itself by being conscious of the in-itself that makes the latter into a world. Consciousness is a "nothingness," it is nothing but this directedness towards the in-itself which necessarily entails that consciousness negate the in-itself by being consciousness of itself as not being that in-itself, otherwise consciousness would be in no way separate from the in-itself and therefore could not be conscious of it.

Consciousness, as a nothingness, arises supported by being as the unity of the body, surpassing the body towards the world. The for-itself, then, is always conscious of the in-itself from a point of view or perspective. For Sartre, this does not contradict his view of ontology as describing being as it manifests itself <u>without intermediary</u>. Being as it is in itself is not <u>like</u> anything, it is only through the for-

itself being conscious of it that it becomes organised into a world and the for-itself can only be conscious of being from a perspective with which to organise it. But in so doing, the for-itself is directly bumping up against the being which is not it. Being-in-itself is a "world," properly speaking, only through the for-itself but at the same time being in-itself has no need of being organised into a world and remains in itself only itself, untouched by the playings on its surface by the for-itself. Being-in-itself does not need the for-itself but the for-itself, as a nothingness, depends on the in-itself if it is to have anything to be conscious of.

Sartre does not claim to be able to explain the ultimate origin of the two types of being. All he feels capable of saying is that "<u>everything takes place as if</u> the in-itself in a project to found itself gave itself the modification of the for-itself."[24] The "as if" is important for Sartre. He is in some way allowing for the idea of a process whereby there is a development from mute being to conscious being, that of the human being, a process which might suggest a kind of pantheism. But the "as if" qualifies everything. Sartre will not allow us to find any refuge in being "at one" with the universe. Being-in-itself is ignorant of itself, and the individual for-itself is radically separated from being-in-itself. That is, existence gives rise to conscious human beings but a full-blooded totality in which the whole of being as an entity is actually conscious of itself as such is never achieved. Sartre describes the two regions as the "quasi-totality"[25] being. Being becomes "conscious of

itself" only through and at the price of the coming into existence of the for-itself as a radically distinct new form of being, a negating being. It is as if the contingently existing being-in-itself attempts to become the conscious foundation of itself while maintaining its solidity, to become "in-itself-for-itself." But it succeeds only in giving rise to that negation of being-in-itself which is the for-itself. The latter in its turn yearns to be "in-itself-for-itself," i.e. to achieve the solidity of being while remaining conscious. But this is impossible and the for-itself remains the negation of being.

These issues will become clearer, hopefully, as we turn to Sartre's view of the conscious human being and the world in more detail.

1. FROM CONSCIOUSNESS TO BEING-IN-ITSELF

Firstly let us explore the region of being-in-itself. Sartre details three main features of this being which are summarised in his statement that "Being is. Being is in itself. Being is what it is."[26] Or, in respective "translations," the non-conscious being independent of the human is uncreated, unaffirmed and contingent.

To take the unaffirmedness of being-in-itself first, Sartre wants to say that the world we experience only is the "world" for us and through us. Being as it is in itself simply <u>is</u> and there is nothing more that can be said of it as it is in itself. For example, in "geological plications"[27] or earthquakes it is only for the human being that destruction

takes place. The for-itself sees boundaries within being between one thing and another and sees these things destroyed by the earthquake. But without the human being there is no such thing as destruction, there are only shifting masses of being (even this is saying too much) and there is not any less being than there was before. It is only through the human being's experience of the world that the world is properly a "world." Being as it is in itself is simply a mute plenitude of existence.

Hence the characterisation of being as "unaffirmed." Being as it is in itself independently of the human being or for-itself is not affirmed as being of this or that character or as being divided up into such an such entities, it just is itself. Sartre even puts us on guard with the use of the notion of "self" with regard to being-in-itself. As it simply <u>is</u>, it is so completely "itself" that this notion of self does not really apply to it and the term "being-in-itself" is a first shoddy attempt of language.[28] Being is so completely itself that it does not have any relation to itself. It is "glued to itself," it is "solid" ("massif").[29] It does not affirm itself, it is totally "in-itself," it just <u>is</u>. It is unaffirmed.

Now if - and we will look at this "if" a little later - we accept the notion that in our experience of "reality" we are relating to being independent of us then Sartre, it seems to me, is correct to say that in itself it is a mute plenitude of existence. Even if, for example, we investigate what the pre-historic world before the emergence of humans was like -

the shape of the continents, the dinosaurs and so on - it is as if we are travelling back in time, like H.G. Wells in his time machine, putting ourselves in that world to describe what it would have been like to us. We cannot avoid bringing it under our experiential terms. If we travel still further back to the "Big Bang" as the "origin of the universe" we find ourselves talking of a huge explosion, as infinite expansion and so on - human terms, retrospectively bringing the Big Bang under our experience. Even the atom is something identified as such in a human theoretical framework. Independent being outside our frameworks, or being-in-itself, would be lost in anonymity.

But if we can accept that if there is such a thing as independent being then it is mute and undifferentiated in itself, can we accept in the first place the thesis that there is such a realm of independent being? Could we apply Berkeley's criticism of Locke's matter to Sartre's being-in-itself, namely that it is an unjustifiable positing of something outside our experience? And even if we could accept the hypothesis of being-in-itself, would it not be only as a probable truth? And then in what sense would this be part of a phenomenology? (As we have seen, Sartre's phenomenology is supposed to describe being as it appears to us). To see how Sartre attempts to cope with this, we must now look at Sartre's characterisation of consciousness and how this leads him to being-in-itself. In the course of this we will meet the two other features of being-in-itself, its uncreatedness and its contingency.

For Sartre, the human being or for-itself is an indissoluble synthesis of body and consciousness or of body and "soul," to use the traditional terms.[30] I shall return to this point later but let us for the moment concentrate on the aspect of consciousness. Sartre follows Husserl in the phenomenological reflection on human consciousness which yields the maxim that "all consciousness is ... consciousness of something."[31] Consciousness must be of something otherwise it could not be consciousness since it would have nothing to be conscious of. Sartre then tries to draw his own insights on consciousness, starting from this basic point.

Consciousness, for Sartre, is an emptiness in that everything is outside it in the world. We must not be misled by this. Sartre's consciousness is not like, for example Locke's empty dark room which gets filled up from the outside. It is in fact the opposite. All objects are posited as outside of consciousness and consciousness directs itself towards them. E.g. the table is not experienced as in consciousness but as out there in space, beside the window, etc.[32] Consciousness is always intended or directed towards some object posited outside of it.

Sartre next examines what it is to be conscious of an object. The important fact, he believes, is that to be conscious of an object the necessary and sufficient condition of being so is to be conscious of being conscious of that object. For, his reasoning goes, it would be absurd to say that I was conscious of an object without being conscious of being so -

this would be a non-conscious consciousness or, in other words, not consciousness at all. But now Sartre faces this difficulty: if consciousness of an object is consciousness of consciousness of an object, do we then in turn have to look for a consciousness of that consciousness and so on ad infinitum, reminiscent of Spinoza's "idea ideae" or idea of an idea?[33]

Sartre attempts to get out of this problem by stopping the regression at the point where we have reached consciousness of being conscious. For that consciousness, as Sartre describes it, is with us all the time but not as a piece of reflective knowledge. It is a non-positional or non-thetic consciousness of itself. This is what Sartre terms the "pre-reflective cogito" which he believes goes beyond Descartes' (reflective) cogito.[34]

We might usefully bring out what Sartre means by non-thetic consciousness and the pre-reflective cogito by comparing his view of consciousness with that of Armstrong.[35] Self-consciousness, for Armstrong, is simply another (physical) state of the brain in which one part of the brain scans another part. This means that there will always by in the end an unscanned scanner. So Armstrong tries to stop the regression by simply accepting that ultimately consciousness cannot be conscious of itself. Armstrong identifies three levels of operation of the mind (or brain). Firstly, the simplest level is that of automatism, as when a motorist on a long monotonous drive keeps the car on the road, changes gear etc. without consciousness of it, later "coming to" and

realising that he or she has driven for miles in this state. The second and third levels are the two types of consciousness: the first, in which, for example, one is thinking furiously about a problem and is "lost to the world"; and the second, self-conscious introspection. Armstrong's three levels, then, are: acting automatically without consciousness of oneself, consciousness of something (in this case, a problem) and of nothing else, and introspection as the only case of self-consciousness.

Sartre would reply that in the case of the motorist or the thinker, one must be conscious of oneself in some way as driving or thinking of the problem. If someone stops me and asks me what I am doing, I will reply immediately: "I'm driving" or "I'm thinking." Sartre actually uses the example of non-reflectively counting cigarettes.[36] I am not reflecting on myself counting them, I am simply conscious of the cigarettes as being twelve in number. But I am conscious of myself in some way as counting. If someone asks me what I am doing, I can reply immediately: "I'm counting." There must be a unifying self-consciousness otherwise I would not be able to produce reflective knowledge of what I am doing, I would be totally cut off from my automatic or non-self-conscious acts.

That which is often called the "mind" is, then, always referred to by Sartre as consciousness and this is always self-consciousness but not primarily in the sense of reflectively positing some piece of knowledge about oneself. Primarily we are engaged in our activities without reflecting

on ourselves doing them, but this does not mean, for Sartre, that one is unconscious of oneself. Consciousness is conscious of itself by an immediate awareness of itself that it does not put into a proposition of knowledge. It does not take up a position on itself to reflect on itself or to put forward a thesis about itself. Non-thetic self-consciousness is a non-reflective self-awareness that traverses all our activities. Consciousness is also capable of transforming itself into a reflective consciousness of itself but this is not the primary case.

Sartre writes "non-positional consciousness (of) self"[37] with the "of" in parentheses to highlight his stipulation that it is not a case of reflective knowledge with a subject positing an object. In his native French (conscience (de) soi), bracketing the "of" is the best he can do. But in English, his wish can be carried out even better with the pre-existing term "self-consciousness" which I have been using already, following Hazel Barnes' English translation of BN (although the term is being used in a different sense from its usual sense in English of self-embarrassment before others). Sartre's notion of non-thetic self-consciousness does seem to get at our experience of being engaged in our normal activities without contemplating on them while at the same time not being a mindless zombie. The activities that were not reflected on at the time are nevertheless part of the flow of my life and it is as such that I later reflect on them.

Consciousness, for Sartre, is consciousness through and through with no other motivation than itself.[38] It is "causa sui."[39] We must be careful not to misinterpret this. Sartre does not mean that consciousness by some mystical process is at one stage non-existent and then suddenly creates itself out of nothing. What he means is that however human consciousness comes into existence, it is its own cause of being conscious of whatever it is conscious of. Consciousness is not mechanically produced as a psychic event from some external cause, it is a spontaneous reference to self of something. Sartre gives the example of pleasure. Pleasure and consciousness of pleasure are the same thing. For Sartre, pleasure and consciousness of pleasure are inseparable from the point of view of both. That is, a pleasure that was totally ignorant of itself would no longer be pleasure. But at the same time the pleasure is not in the first instance reflective introspection on pleasure. "Pleasure," as Sartre puts it, "must not disappear behind its own self-consciousness."[40] The pleasure is the activity of consciousness and the latter is fully engaged in that activity. To stress the inseparability, Sartre writes "consciousness (of) pleasure"[41] with the "of" in parentheses once more. We could again eliminate the "of" altogether by saying "pleasure-consciousness."

Sartre's notion of consciousness as "causa sui" is an attempt to cater for that absolute reference of what one experiences to oneself as a centre that I described in the introduction. We will return to this issue later but let us now continue along Sartre's path from consciousness to being-in-itself.

Sartre examines the objects in the world as they appear to consciousness - the phenomena. Sartre accepts that in this area modern thought has made progress "by reducing the existent to the series of appearances which manifest it"[42] and he proceeds to give an exposition of this position. The "modern thought" referred to is the idea of the phenomenon as found, for example, in the phenomenology of Husserl and of Heidegger.[43] Sartre accepts the position as far as it goes but then adds to it his own further requirements.

The position replaces the old dualism in which the object's appearance to us is the superficial exterior behind which is hidden the interior, its true reality or essence. An example of this kind of thinking could be Locke's representative theory of perception in which the object gives us its coloured, odorous appearance behind which is hidden the real colourless, odourless material object.

In the new position, I can never see an object such as a cup, for example, in its entirety all at once. It is revealed to me in a series of appearances (or, to use the phenomenological German, "abschattungen" - literally "shadings"). There is an infinity of possible appearances I could have of the cup. There is no hidden reality behind the appearance. The essence of the cup is the principle of the series. This is the new duality of the infinite (one object across the infinity of points of view on it) in the finite (the individual appearance).[44]

Basically, the new position is saying that an object is revealed to us in the appearances we have of it and we take each individual appearance as fully the object although from a particular view. Sartre now wants to question the being of the appearance, its existential status. In accordance with Berkeley's criticism of Locke, could we not simply say that its being is its appearing to or being perceived by consciousness, that for the object esse est percipi?[45]

Sartre's answer emanates from what he believes are the implications that have to be drawn from the dictum that consciousness is always consciousness of something, implications which Husserl failed to realise. Consciousness is always consciousness of something. When we look at the something, the appearing objects in the world that consciousness is conscious of, there is another aspect that has to be attended to. Eg. going back to Sartre's cup, I am conscious of it as a "reality," it is there and it is not me, "the series of its appearances is bound by a principle that does not depend on my whim."[46] Sartre is pointing to that sort of obstinate substantiality of the things we come up against in the world. The table is out there in space, a centre of opacity for consciousness. It would take an infinite process to inventory the contents of a thing such as the table [47] (as with the aforementioned lamp of Merleau-Ponty).

Sartre had already pointed to this aspect of experience in The Psychology of Imagination where in contrast to the poverty of the mental image of an object, the object as

actually perceived has infinite details that one can go on discovering.[48] In a similar vein in the even earlier Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, Sartre notes that to get what we want from the world we have to utilise it in accordance with its deterministic laws.[49] Sartre, as I said earlier, later refers to this as the coefficient of adversity in things.

Basically, Sartre wants to appeal to our everyday experience as the best proof against idealism: the door I have to open if I want to get into the room, the mountain which I have to climb with effort if I want to get to the top, the infinite detail I can discover in an object, e.g. the pattern of the rock, its hardness, even the view of it under a microscope, etc. Sartre, mindful of this aspect of experience brings in his "ontological proof."[50] This, to put it simply, says that consciousness has to be conscious of something and that to be so it must have something actually outside it and independent of it. Consciousness must have something to go on, it could not as a pure existence on its own constitute the world of objects out of its own internal resources.

Sartre's reasoning is this. Consciousness is directed towards objects experienced as outside it where these objects are opaque and resistant to consciousness. They do not appear and disappear at my whim. A pure consciousness on its own could not produce such a world of objects out of its "ideas" so to speak such that it would both itself constitute the world and also have it as something separate from itself to be conscious of and with opacity and resistance. If the

world of objects were purely the creation of consciousness, it would be in no way distinct from consciousness. Consciousness as a pure existence on its own is not possible, it could not get out of itself to be conscious of anything.

To Sartre, then, "consciousness in its inmost nature is a relation to a transcendent being."[51] Here we find Sartre's balancing act. Consciousness is conscious of the being outside it and independent of it but it is only through this process that being is affirmed as a "world." The existence of being is not merely a probable hypothesis for Sartre. Being as it is in itself is not like anything. Being is manifested by the phenomena with their coefficient of adversity. The phenomena are only phenomena for consciousness but they have a being independent of consciousness; there is a "transphenomenal" being of the phenomena.[52]

The objects that appear to us have a foundation of being. Being is not a special separate quality of an object that one can observe, the object simply "is" and all its qualities are equally its being.[53] The object would not be recognized as that object with those qualities without the for-itself but nevertheless its being does not depend on the for-itself. Being is manifested and veiled at the same time[54] in that it appears to us but that by the same token it always appears with a mode of being, as the appearance to us of particular objects from a particular perspective and so on. However, this is not a distortion of being as it is really like in itself because in itself it is not like anything, it is just

in itself. it is this being that we take as our world of objects:

> "This being is no other than the transphenomenal being of phenomena; not of a noumenal being hidden behind them. It is the being of this table, tobacco, lamp, more generally the being of the world which is implied by consciousness."[55]

So before we engage in philosophical reflections on being, we are already dealing with it. We have "pre-ontological" comprehension of being, as Sartre puts it, borrowing Heidegger's term.[56]

We have been looking at Sartre's argument that a pure consciousness on its own could not constitute a resistant world to be conscious of and that consciousness is, then, related to transcendent being. But to be fair to Berkeley, he did not simply say that human consciousness creates its world by itself. It is the infinite spirit, God, who communicates the "world" to us in the form of an ordered system of ideas. Does this not cater for the coefficient of adversity?

For Sartre, this would fail too. The inability of pure consciousness to get out of itself applies even to a divine consciousness whether it is conceived of in Berkeley fashion with God creating a world out of ideas or whether it is conceived of in the fashion of traditional creationism where God is the originator of the material being of the universe. Creation, Sartre says, ultimately supposes a break between creator and creation. I work on my creation and at the end, although it is my product, it is separate from me, it has

being independent of me.[57] (We could say he is pointing to a "Frankenstein syndrome.") This is visualised very well in Michelangelo's famous painting "the creation of man" in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican. The creation of man by God is symbolised by God's finger touching that of man. Well actually not quite. There is a little gap between the two fingers as if God had touched man, so passing life over to him, and had then withdrawn, his creation complete. But for Sartre, the divine consciousness as a pure existence on its own could not create anything separate from itself, it could not withdraw and leave the gap. Even if God did manage to create being and then withdraw, it would still be left to explain how the resultant being sustains itself in existence. And if we instead say that God continually sustains it, it loses any distinct existence as creation outside the divinity.[58]

These considerations at last bring us to the two other characteristics of being: it is uncreated ("it is") and it is contingent ("it is what it is"). For Sartre, being is uncreated. Having denounced creationism, Sartre does not offer an alternative explanation of how being came about because there is no explanation: being is and that is that. The contingency of being follows from this. Being just is, there is no supreme, amazing justification for it. Being just is what it is, it is contingent:

> "uncreated, without reason for being, without any connection with another being, being-in-itself is <u>de trop</u> for eternity."[59]

(Of course, even these three things Sartre has learned about transcendent being from philosophical reflection - that in itself it is unaffirmed and that it is uncreated and contingent - would not be known by being itself).

If we accept Sartre's view that the world or, to cast our nets wider, the universe, is a manifestation of transcendent being then to say that being just is seems to be an understandable conclusion to reach. Consider that great search for the origin of the universe. Here we find ourselves for ever in pursuit of an elusive first cause. If we say that the cause of the universe was the Big Bang we then want to know what caused it. And indeed some theories point to the Little Whimper as the cause of the Big Bang. But still not satisfied, we would then want to know the cause of the Little Whimper and so on ad infinitum. Eventually we have to say that, well, no ultimate cause of the existence of the universe is discoverable, being just is and that is that.

But at this point someone could perhaps object that we are not under any logical obligation to accept the idea that the universe is a manifestation of transcendent being. The ontological "proof," our objector might say, cannot be an indubitable one hundred per cent logical proof. All we have to go on is our experience of the world, even if this includes encountering a coefficient of adversity, and we cannot find a way outside that experience to discover its cause. Just now we met what we might call the "astronomer's paradox:" we cannot reach a first cause or beginning of the being of the universe because we will always be able to

question after the cause of this cause, yet to say being just is and does not have a beginning is infinitely perplexing to us such as we are within the universe where normal causality is observed. What this paradox demonstrates is that within our system of experience a certain logic applies but it cannot be consistently applied outside the system to explain why it exists in the first place. Hence Sartre reaches the perplexing point where he says that being just is. That, our objector might continue, is only one possible way of looking at our system of experience. Other views are just as logically possible. What Sartre has allowed for himself can be allowed to other views. Sartre has said that being just "is." It is just as open to others to say that God just is and that this divinity is the creator of the universe whether in the fashion of "conventional" creationism or in that of creationism a la Berkeley. it would even be open to us to say that human beings just are such that their consciousnesses in some way project a world for themselves to be conscious of. Within our system of experience, we find ourselves unable to produce objects at will from nothing but neither do we find things just "being" without beginning. The alternative views to that of Sartre are just as entitled as he to posit explanations of our experience perplexing to that experience itself.

Is Sartre defenceless in the face of this objection? I think not. There is in my view a sustainable case for the defence. First of all, Sartre is not, I believe, attempting to give an indubitable rational "proof" of transcendent being in the same spirit in which, for example, St. Anselm produced his

ontological "proof" of God's existence purely by reasoning on the concept of God.[60] Sartre's positing of transcendent being is done more in the spirit in which he later puts forward a "cogito of the other's existence"[61] in which he says we cannot "prove" that the other human beings we encounter are conscious existences like me but tries to show how it is immediately as such that I regard them in my normal experience. Similarly, Sartre tries to show how in our normal experience we strike an attitude towards the world as the resistant being outside us. It could be argued that Sartre's positing of transcendent being is based on an examination of our experience, fits in with that experience and is to be preferred to other logical but fanciful possibilities.

That consciousness as a pure existence on its own is not possible does seem to be the proper conclusion to draw from our experience of the world. Sartre tries to describe that experience. Our experiencing the world makes it the world for us but at the same time we encounter that world as resistant to us, it is not something we gratuitously invent. In our experience objects <u>are</u>. That is, we do not experience ourselves as conscious of phantom objects with a secret being elsewhere. The objects we see, hear, touch etc. <u>are</u> the resistant being outside us as we encounter it. This does seem to adequately capture our normal everyday experience where, for example, when I look at this word processor with which I am typing now, I am conscious of it as an object outside me. I see it with my eyes under certain lighting conditions and from a certain angle etc., but I am not

conscious of a "seeing" or of an image. My seeing the word processor is my relating to it. I act towards it as that object out there, the word processor which is, an object I cannot make appear or disappear by magic.

Now we human beings such as we are with this experience of a resistant world would find it impossible to conceive or imagine what it would be like to be a pure consciousness existing on its own. What could a conscious existence prior to any relation to anything to see, hear, touch or in any way encounter as an outside possibly be conscious of? On what basis could it "think" of anything and project this into a resistant world? When Sartre says, then, that consciousness is a relation to a transcendent being, he does seem to be adequately describing our experience of the world and to be adequately bringing out the conditions for the possibility of that experience.

So for Sartre, in our everyday experience we already treat the world as transcendent being and ourselves as necessarily relating to it. But the point still remains that outside the system of our experience, trying to explain how it originated, the rules found inside it do not apply. It would still, then, be logically possible to view our system of experience as having its origin entirely within the resources of a pure divine or human consciousness. However, such views grate against what Sartre has been able to bring out about the nature of our experience and involve wild speculative jumps of belief in order to posit the idea of the original pure consciousness. Here in the realm of the logically

possible, all manner of bizarre interpretations could be arrived at. It would seem more reasonable to accept along with Sartre what experience itself suggests to us, namely that we are relating to a world with a being independent of us, and that we have to say that being just is lest we pursue the infinite regress to the elusive beginning or posit the existence of pure consciousness unrelated to anything, which reflection on our experience suggests to us is impossible.

Sartre's notion that consciousness is related to a transcendent being precludes him from accepting in full Husserl's phenomenological reduction. He accepts the "eidetic" part, going to the essence of a phenomenon, but not the bracketing of questions of the existence of the world. Of course, Husserl's view on this issue went through various developments and transformations but Sartre focuses on Husserl's use of the idea of "hyle,"[62] a flux of data towards which we remain neutral as to its mode of existence. Consciousness, by directing its intentionality towards the hyle, constitutes the world as a world. As Sartre interprets it, the hyle seems to be both subjective and objective to consciousness since it is within consciousness but must also supply objectivity, it must provide that infinity of detail and resistance in objects.

For Sartre, this neutrality towards the world's type of existence and restriction to talking of the hyle towards which consciousness is directed is untenable. Firstly, the idea of consciousness <u>containing</u> the hyle along with its infinite detail and resistance cannot be allowed. Such a

containment would not be envisaged as possible under Sartre's ontological proof. It would solidify consciousness into an ordinary thing. Secondly, we would still be left with the question of the being of the hyle.

From this perspective, then, in which consciousness is an emptiness directed towards a transcendent being, Sartre declares that the first procedure of philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and re-establish its true connection with the world.[63] Sartre has already pointed us towards the nature of this connection: it is one in which consciousness relates to transcendent being, thereby making the latter become a world for the former. At the same time, he claims to avoid the Locke or Kant-type problem of positing the existence of a real world behind the scenes to which we, restricted to appearances, cannot penetrate. To see in more detail how this formation of the world is accomplished we must follow Sartre as he more fully sets out the details of the relation of consciousness to transcendent being or being-in-itself.

1.5 CONSCIOUSNESS AS NEGATION

The primary aspect of this relation is, for Sartre, one of negation. We have already implicitly encountered this in the stages of Sartre's argument we have looked at so far. Sartre has said of the objects one is conscious of in the external world that they are <u>not me</u> and that the appearances of them are bound by a series whose principle does not depend on my whim. And in his ontological proof Sartre has said that consciousness as a pure existence on its own could not create

objects out of its own resources in such a way that they would be other than or not consciousness in order that they would be something for consciousness to be conscious of. Making this explicit, Sartre says that consciousness is conscious of itself as not being the in-itself. Consciousness, for Sartre, is essentially negativity. To be conscious of something necessarily implies consciousness of oneself as not being that something.[64] One has to view the thing as something separate from oneself otherwise one would not be able to recognize it as a thing to be conscious of. This characterization of consciousness as negativity will permeate the whole of Sartre's philosophy.

Some important questions immediately come to mind here, though, regarding Sartre's notion that consciousness is conscious of itself as not being the in-itself. First of all, being-in-itself is said to be an undifferentiated plenitude of being. But are we ever conscious of such a thing and conscious of not being it? At any rate, if we were to ask someone what he or she was doing, his or her first reply would be unlikely to be: "why, I'm negating being-in-itself, of course!" The more likely reply would be a description of the ordinary particular activity he or she was engaged in at that moment. Are we, then, conscious of (not being) the in-itself through the particular things we are conscious of? If so, how? Indeed, in concrete individual situations Sartre will talk of particular "in-itselfs" such as tables, inkwells, etc. But if being-in-itself is an undifferentiated plenitude how can he talk of particular "in-itselfs"? Finally, to encapsulate the whole problem, how

exactly does our consciousness/negation of being-in-itself make the latter a world and what status does a world so constituted have? We will arrive in time, I hope, to the answers to these questions as we follow the development of Sartre's theory. The first step for Sartre, however, is to convince us that negation is a relevant factor to be considered in our examination of the relation of the conscious human being to the world. He tries to do this by showing from concrete examples that negation is an important aspect of our everyday experience.

Sartre offers us a series of examples which he believes manifest not only the negating activity of consciousness but also the objective existence of non-being or nothingness. He arrives at the first example, the question, by turning on his own activity of philosophical questioning. Let us focus on a simple example of a question to follow through Sartre's reasoning. If we take the question "what does the Loch Ness Monster look like?" we see that it is presented as if there has to be some positive reply. I could reply: "Nothing. No such creature exists." To come across such a reply is, for Sartre, to encounter the objective existence of a non-being. Even if one does gain a_positive reply, negation is still involved. If the monster is green and scaly then it looks like <u>that</u> and <u>not</u> soft, pink and cuddly or whatever. And even asking the question in the first place implies the non-being surrounding the truth (since it is this and not that), and the possibility of non-being in transcendent being[65] (as in the case of the world not containing the fabled monster).

Sartre anticipates an objection that could be raised, namely that non-being is not objectively encountered but is simply an after-product from judgement. E.g. I expect to find 1500 francs in my wallet but find only 1300. I have not experienced the non-being of 1500 francs but have counted 1300 francs. Reality is fully positive and negation is simply a quality of our judgement about reality.[66] Sartre readily admits that human expectation is involved but he still insists that consciousness thereby encounters objective non-being.

To show this, Sartre steps down from reflectively posited questions to examples of "questioning-in-action," if I may call it that. E.g. my car is broken down and I look at (question) the carburettor. It is possible that there is "nothing there" in the carburettor, i.e. that it is not the cause of the problem. The nothingness here could not appear except on the basis of my prior expectation of "something wrong" there, but nevertheless it is not purely subjective. I experience the non-being of a problem with the carburettor as an objective fact.[67] For Sartre, this common type of experience shows that in our normal everyday activities we are just as prepared to encounter a disclosure of non-being as of being. As well as the pre-judicative comprehension of being spoken of earlier, we have a pre-judicative comprehension of non-being.[68]

A clearer example Sartre gives is that of destruction[69] which we looked at briefly earlier. Being as it is in itself devoid of the intentionality of consciousness towards it does

not contain any "destruction" because there is no-one there to experience being as composed of particular objects that can then be observed to meet their demise. In an earthquake, in itself there are only shifting masses of being. There is destruction only for the for-itself or consciousness. Consciousness by a division of being by limits can see different objects as such. This involves negation - e.g. the wall begins here and not anywhere else and ends there and not anywhere else. Only because consciousness sees being as divided into different things can there be destruction as such. E.g. I see a wall destroyed rather than there just occurring a rippling of being. But although destruction can only be seen as such by consciousness, it is nevertheless an objective event. As well as a transphenomenality of being, there is a transphenomenality of non-being.[70] To take Sartre's example of the vase, being-in-itself is indifferent to its shattering, it is only seen as a vase and then a destroyed vase by consciousness - but I could not magically reverse the event: "its destruction would be an irreversible absolute event which I could only verify."[71] Or a city is destructible and this is an objective fact but at the same time it is so only because human beings see it as a city and maintain it against danger. As Sartre puts it rather startlingly:

> "destruction is an essentially human thing ... it is man who destroys his clients through the agency of earthquakes or directly, who destroys his ships through the agency of cyclones or directly."[72]

Sartre's final example is perhaps the most persuasive in trying to demonstrate that nothingness is something we actually normally experience rather than a product of judgement. This is the intriguing example of "the nothingness of Pierre."[73] I have an appointment to meet Pierre in a cafe. However, I am late and Pierre is a punctual person. Will he have waited? I enter the cafe and scan the faces of the patrons. I focus successively on each individual as the figure on the ground of the cafe and then throw him or her back to the ground as I see that he or she is not Pierre. If Pierre is not there, once I realize this I have effected a double nihilation: all the people are negated, ignored in the ground as not being Pierre, and Pierre is negated as not being there. I am expecting Pierre to be there but he is not and this annoying "not" is something I actually experience, I experience the nothingness of Pierre. There is a nothingness of Pierre only because I expected him but it is nevertheless an objective event. It is not a matter of judgement. I could amuse myself with judgements about historical figures - e.g. "Wellington is not here"[74] but such judgements presuppose the existence of nothingness that we concretely experience as in the episode in the cafe.

Sartre does seem to be correct at least in that nothingness is a feature of our experience. We can all readily relate to the example of searching in the crowd of faces for the person who turns out not to be there. Indeed, nothingness can become the dominant aspect of one's life: e.g. inability to

cope with life after the death of a loved one. One feels the gap, the nothingness of the loved one.

At the same time, Sartre has again taken care not to imply any idealist invention of the world by pointing to the transphenomenality of non-being (in addition to that of being), as in the case of the breaking of the vase, an event which cannot be magically made not to have occurred. Having brought to our attention this aspect of our experience he calls nothingness, Sartre now inquires after its origin and this will lead us into seeing more precisely how the for-itself's negation of being-in-itself makes the latter into a world.

First of all, Sartre rejects any "realist" notion of nothingness in which the latter just subsists of its own accord as an absence of something. Sartre wants to counter this common notion of nothingness, as found, for example, in "naive cosmogonies."[75] These present the idea of the absolute pure nothingness that was there "before" the universe existed. There was absolutely nothing and then there was the universe.

Sartre's criticism of this conception is that it is projecting human expectations and interests into this supposed pure nothingness. To think of it as the "nothingness" which was there "before" the universe existed, one first of all has to posit the universe or being as existing and then think of it as negated in the before. But this nothingness itself devoid of us would not be a "before"

nor even a "nothingness" because there would not be a being for it to be nothingness of and neither would there be anyone to posit such a negation. The "before the universe existed" is inconceivable. Devoid of the projections we put into it, projections it itself cannot have, the original emptiness gives way to "a total indetermination which it would be impossible to conceive, even and especially as a nothingness."[76] This gives Sartre another reason for saying that being simply is.

Having ruled out any notion of nothingness as a simple pure emptiness subsisting by itself, Sartre looks for the origin of nothingness within the relationship of being-in-itself and being-for-itself. We have already seen Sartre characterize the in-itself as am undifferentiated and solid plenitude of being. One way of visualizing this point is to say that being-in-itself is "compressed." Not in a literal physical sense, of course. Being-in-itself is compressed in that it has no point of view on itself in which to appear opened out into a differentiation of various parts and entities. So understood in this ontological sense, we can use the image of being-in-itself as a solid compressed mass lost in an anonymous undifferentiation. In contrast, according to Sartre, the human region of the for-itself represents a "decompression"[77] of being. It is a "fissure"[78] or "hole"[79] in being. The source of the nothingness experienced in the world is the for-itself because the consciousness of the for-itself is itself a nothingness. If we examine what this idea of consciousness as nothingness means, this will lead us into

seeing how, in Sartre's theory, the nothingness of the world is produced.

First of all, consciousness is not a nothingness in the sense of simply not existing at all.[80] This would take us back to the idea of a pure emptiness which would require a witness to establish it as an emptiness of something and which therefore could not produce nothingness in the world. For Sartre, consciousness is indeed not a graspable thing-substance (it is no thing) but it does have an existence. It exists as the nothingness of being or, as we put it earlier, consciousness is conscious of itself as not being the in-itself. This is expressed through consciousness of (not being) particular things.

Consciousness is always consciousness <u>of</u> (not being) <u>something</u>, it is a situated nothingness.

For consciousness to be such a nothingness entails that it is in a way beyond being, freed from the restraints that compress the latter. Sartre returns to the question as an example of how consciousness as nothingness is beyond being. He declares that:

> "If we admitted that the question is determined in the questioner by universal determinism, the question would thereby become unintelligible and even inconceivable."[81]

The determined question is conceivable, he says, because a real cause can produce only a real effect ("real" here being used in the sense it has in a theory viewing the universe as entirely determined positive reality). Such a determinism

lies in the full positivity of the in-itself. There is no trace of nothingness there. A question which was determined within the in-itself would not properly be a "question." It could not be known as a question, it would simply be another determined event and even this would be lost in the undifferentiated solidity of being-in-itself. For Sartre, the human ability to question takes us beyond this determinism. One questions being and in this sense one has withdrawn from it; rather than it determining one, one is outside determinism, questioning being. In this sense, as Sartre suggested to us earlier, the questioner nihilates himself or herself. He or she also nihilates the thing questioned by neutralising it, so accepting the possibility of a disclosure of non-being as well as of being.

Extending out from the example of the question, it is as such a nothingness beyond being that the for-itself can be presented with a differentiated world. If we were within the compressed being-in-itself we would be unable to loosen ourselves from it to see it as divided into different entities (as in the earlier example of destruction).

In his discussion of negatites, Sartre gives us some details of how consciousness performs this differentiation and thereby produces nothingness in the world. "Negatite" is one of Sartre's neoligisms, a noun made out of the verb "to negate." Sartre gives the example of the distance between two points.[82] Let us take Glasgow and Edinburgh as our two points. To think of the distance between Glasgow and Edinburgh, I must focus on the stretch of the road between

the two cities and no further in each direction. I negate anything beyond the points or outwith the stretch of road. Being-in-itself is just a mute plenitude and could not itself know distance. But at the same time, distance is not purely subjective; to get to Edinburgh I have to cross this distance. Distance is a negatite, an objective nothingness found in the world but which I am nevertheless responsible for producing. The world we experience is run through with these negatites of which there are numerous examples similar in structure to distance:

> "absence, change, otherness, repulsion. There is an infinite number of realities which are not only objects of judgement but which are experienced, opposed, feared, etc. by the human being and which in their inner structure are inhabited by negation as by a necessary condition of their existence. We shall call them negatites."[83]

Our actions in the world, use of instruments and so on, already presuppose our accomplishment of these negatites.

For Sartre, then, the nothingness experienced in the world is produced by being-for-itself. It could not come from the in-itself since it simply is. Neither could it simply exist, as we have seen Sartre argue, on its own as pure emptiness. Nothingness has to be produced by someone as nothingness of being. This has the consequence that nothingness depends on being in the first place and has to be produced by being-for-itself, the being of the human. Consciousness as nothingness is necessarily embodied, a structure of being-for-itself. Consciousness, for Sartre, produces itself as nothingness. Consciousness, he has said, is causa sui, it is a spontaneous

meaningful reference of things to itself. Sartre views this as being a nothingness in comparison to the solidity of being-in-itself. Consciousness in his view, then, produces itself as nothingness. In doing so, it also produces the nothingness found in the world.

Sartre's succinct way of putting it is to say that nothingness "is nihilated."[84] This is another Sartrean neologism which could be more literally translated as "is nothingized." He is emphasising how nothingness is produced by being-for-itself. We have already come across Sartre using the term "nihilate" synonymously for "negate." To negate something is to surround it with nothingness, to "nothingize" it.

In a similar vein, Sartre also says that nothingness "est ete" or, literally, "is been." Hazel Barnes, the translator, renders it as "is made-to-be"[85] taking it that "been" is transitive and is again emphasising how nothingness is produced by consciousness. This, I think, is correct. However, the phrase "is been" perhaps conveys more readily the idea of a nothingness in the world, like the nothingness of Pierre, being already in objective existence while at the same time passively receiving its existence from consciousness.

There are two features of the nothingness produced in the world that Sartre brings out at different places that could seem contradictory. As against Hegel, Sartre does not hold that negation is already in being-in-itself. Being-for-

itself has to produce nothingness. Being-in-itself does not need negation. In this Sartre says that "non-being exists only on the surface of being."[86] Being does not need nothingness, the latter comes along and "haunts" it.[87]

But Sartre also reacts against Heidegger's idea that all negation consists of going out to nothingness, going beyond the thing to the nothingness outside. For Sartre, the nothingness is far more integrated with the things, at the heart of them, as in the example of distance. "Nothingness," Sartre says, "lies coiled in the heart of being - like a worm."[88] How does this square with what was said before, that non-being is only on the surface of being?

Sartre's view, I think, must be that non-being is on the surface of being in the sense that being has no need of non-being, it is beyond need of differentiation. But for being-for-itself nothingness must run through being since that is the way the for-itself is conscious of it (through negation). But this is not to distort being since being is not in itself "like" anything, it is undifferentiated and hence has no true likeness to be distorted.

In this discussion of consciousness as the "nothingness," Sartre has been trying to portray consciousness as a sui generis type of existence, to be distinguished from being-in-itself. Another aspect of the meaning of consciousness as nothingness emphasises this. Consciousness, Sartre says, "must be what it is not and not be what it is."[89] Being-in-itself is compressed and just is what it is. But the for-

itself as consciousness is a decompression of being so that the law of identity cannot be steadfastly applied to it. Consciousness is what it is not and is not what it is.

Sartre gives the example of belief-consciousness.[90] Let us take my belief in Sartre's philosophy. My consciousness is belief but at the same time it is not solidly identified with belief. Consciousness is the producer of its belief and has to maintain it. Belief is something volatile. An even better example, perhaps, is religious belief. The believer has to fight doubt, pray for a stronger faith and so on. In this way consciousness is the belief which it is not (it makes itself belief but is not completely identified with this belief) and vice versa it is not the belief which it is (it is not completely identifiable with the belief it makes itself be). It is part of the price of consciousness existing as nothingness, as escaping the compression of being-in-itself and so being able to relate to a differentiated world, that it cannot be solidly identified with any of its activities. It is separated from them by nothingness. It has for its ideal remaining consciousness but also achieving the solidity of the in-itself. This is the ideal of the "in-itself-for-itself."[91] E.g. being a great man or woman of faith without the least shadow of doubt. But such solidity cannot be achieved. We will return to this ideal later.

Earlier we looked at Sartre's notion of consciousness as necessarily self-consciousness. That is, to be conscious of something is, for Sartre, necessarily to be (pre-

reflectively) conscious of oneself as being conscious of that something. Sartre now returns to self-consciousness to re-examine it in the light of his view that consciousness is a nothingness. For Sartre, it is only being-for-itself as having this structure of negativity that can have this self-consciousness or "presence-to-self."[92] The non-conscious region of being-in-itself knows no differentiation, it has no negativity itself. Sartre borrows the term "being-in-itself" from tradition to designate this mute plenitude of being[93] but, as we have already heard him say, the term is not strictly accurate. Being-in-itself is no mute and compressed that one cannot even say that it itself has the relationship with itself of just being itself. Being-in-itself just is, it cannot have a self.

Presence-to-self, then, according to Sartre, is a structure of being -for-itself, maintained by consciousness in its negativity. Presence-to-self belongs to consciousness as nothingness. Consciousness is always taken up in some activity; it is belief or joy or the perception of some object and so on. Correlatively - to view it from the other side - belief, joy or perception of an object have to be consciousness of belief or of joy or of an object. Perhaps, then, we could say that belief (to concentrate on this example)[94] and consciousness are identical. However, total identity with self, Sartre has told us, lies in the realm of the in-itself and in such an identity the self and self-consciousness have no possible meaning and cannot appear. So to say that consciousness is belief cannot be to make a statement of identity. But neither can we say that the

belief is one distinct thing and that consciousness, another separate entity, comes along and is conscious of the belief. This would leave us with our old "consciousness of consciousness of consciousness ...." problem.

Sartre's solution is to say that consciousness as self-consciousness is what it is not and is not what it is. For belief to exist meaningfully as belief rather that be lost within the anonymity of the in-itself, belief must exist as consciousness of belief. This is consciousness being conscious of itself (pre-reflectively) as consciousness of belief. Or, to put it another way, the for-itself is present to itself as believing. In one sense consciousness <u>is</u> the belief, the believing is the activity consciousness is engaged in. Consciousness cannot be grasped as not directed at anything, so the consciousness is not anything but belief, it is believing consciousness. So belief is consciousness (of) belief and consciousness (of) belief is belief. But an impalpable nothingness separates consciousness and belief. The belief-consciousness is a unity which cannot be cut cleanly into two separate parts - the nothingness between consciousness and belief cannot be grasped. However, absolute identity would make consciousness disappear. Consciousness is engaged as belief but at the same time it is not belief. To be conscious of oneself as believing is to be conscious of oneself as not being identical to the belief. Hence, as we noted earlier, one has to work to maintain a faith. Hence also consciousness has other activities besides belief. There is a nothingness between consciousness and itself[95] or consciousness is the nothingness of itself.

Without this nothingness, consciousness would be sucked back into the in-itself.

For Sartre, then, consciousness produces itself as self-consciousness and this is a negating activity. Self-consciousness, as in the example of belief consciousness, is "a duality which is unity."[96] Sartre also describes it as "a reflection which is its own reflecting."[97] Reflection and reflecting are not being spoken of here in the sense of introspection etc., but rather in the sense of a game of mirrors. Consciousness does not operate in a Spinozan infinite regress as "consciousness of consciousness of consciousness ..." but rather as a unity through a double reference. Belief, joy, knowledge of objects in the world etc. cannot exist except as the activity of self-consciousness (they refer to self-consciousness) and self-consciousness in turn refers to belief, etc., it only exists as directed to something. But this double reference is within a unity so it is not like two mirrors reflecting into each other. It is rather, like a mirror reflecting into itself.

Sartre's view that self-consciousness is a nothingness has great implications for the very concept of the self or "ego." In discussing "The Self and the Circuit of Selfness,"[98] Sartre goes so far as to say that the ego is an "in-itself,"[99] it is a produced object. He is here reiterating the view he put forward in his earlier work, The Transcendence of the Ego.[100] A simple way of putting it, though a rather crude way too, is to say that, for Sartre,

consciousness is "impersonal." But is this not a rather shocking position for such an ardent advocate of the view that study of the human being must refer to consciousness and its intentionality?

A closer look shows that Sartre's objectivisation of the ego does not contradict his view of consciousness. We have to be careful to note in what sense the idea of ego is being used. In general usage, the term sometimes denotes in a vague way one's "person" or "personality" and sometimes it specifically refers to the operation of the mind in saying "I..." Now Sartre, in his investigation of the human being in which consciousness and its intentionality must be explicitly referred to, cannot just label consciousness an ego or take operations of reflection (or of the "I") for granted. Sartre wants to examine the genesis of the ego.

Sartre has already stated that consciousness cannot be simply identified with anything. This even applies to the ego. We cannot just say "consciousness is an ego" in any of the above senses. This would be a solidification of consciousness and hence, for Sartre, the disappearance of consciousness. Consciousness is first of all immediate pre-reflective self-consciousness. It is already a pre-reflective presence-to-itself. This is what releases the human being from the compression of being-in-itself so that it can inhabit a realm of meaning. But this primarily pre-reflectively. Secondarily, consciousness is able to carry this presence-to-self (a negation) further by making itself reflective

consciousness, by engaging in operations where it can say "I..."

For Sartre, consciousness is individual and not an object like any other. His denial that it is an ego is in the sense that consciousness is not the "I" of its reflective operations. The "I" is produced by this individual consciousness. By "I" it is referring to itself but it is not solidly an I operation. Similarly, the ego in the sense of one's personality - e.g. in the sense that someone might say that "Tony Beekman has an inflated ego" - is not something which consciousness solidly is. If the charge against me were justified (which, of course, I in my great humility can tell you it is not), still my consciousness is not that inflated ego. An inflated Tony Beekman ego did not just pop into the world. Rather, an individual consciousness, by the strategies in life it has taken, has produced for itself this personality. (We will return to the subject of personality later.)

So Sartre is not in fact denying that consciousness is personal or that it can make "I" operations. He is, rather, trying to look at the process of consciousness making itself personal. Consciousness "makes itself personal" and:

> "what confers personal existence on a being is not the possession of an ego - which is only the sign of the personality - but it is the fact that the being exists for itself as presence to itself."[101]

The image of a circuit fits Sartre's idea of selfness well. Pre-reflective self-consciousness is self-consciousness through the circuit of intending towards its objects and intending towards itself intending towards its objects. Reflection involves explicitly positing the "self" but this posited self is a moment of the process of consciousness not its entirety.

Sartre's view of the ego as an object, more fully set out in The Transcendence of the Ego, is intended as a criticism of Husserl's characterisation of consciousness as an Ego. This may not be entirely fair to Husserl in that it could be said that he was using the term in a loose sense to designate consciousness with its intentionality as distinguished from ordinary objects. Husserl in the course of his career set out various types of ego. He did not seen consciousness as immediately reflective consciousness. In his later work,[102] Husserl speaks of "sedimentation" through which we unquestioningly operate with ways of seeing the world handed down to us from the scientific culture of the day and, indeed, his whole philosophy was characterised by the idea that we firstly operate in a "natural attitude" so that we require phenomenological reflection to examine how, for example, we accomplish our organised perception of the world. There are, then, in Husserl a few embryonic hints of the idea of pre-reflective consciousness. At any rate, Sartre makes the issue explicit an rigourously applies the findings of his study of the genesis of the ego.

1.6 CONSCIOUSNESS AS BODY-FOR-ITSELF

However, at this stage in our quest to find an adequate foundational approach to study of the human being and the world, we encounter a difficult problem. We have been freely using the term "consciousness" here and have been looking at Sartre's description of it as self-consciousness, negation and so on. But we have already met one proviso, namely that consciousness is not primarily reflective. At the outset of his discussion of nothingness Sartre also makes clear that he views "the concrete" as "man within the world."[103] Sartre wants to make explicit reference to consciousness in his explanation of the human being in the world but it is not a case of an ethereal, knowing ghost-substance encountering first an unorganised being-in-itself and then, on the basis of reflective decisions, imposing ideal boundaries within it to make it a world. The human being within the world is a synthetic dynamic process and consciousness is one aspect of this process. We are talking, then, of the everyday "flesh and blood" human being.

Yet when we look at the body of the human being with its flesh and blood, bones, organs, central nervous system and so on we do not immediately find "consciousness," that existential marvel which Sartre believes he is dealing with. What can the relation of consciousness to the body be? How can there be such a relation? Perhaps we are going to end up with the old Cartesian difficulty of uniting the spiritual entity which performs the cogito with the physical body. Rather than be left in this position, might it not be better to accept some sort of physicalist explanation of the human

being such as that of Central-state Materialism? While accepting Central-state Materialism as the ultimate explanatory theory of the human being, we may at the same time accept Sartre's notion of consciousness for preliminary descriptive purposes.

This would not at all satisfy Sartre. To say that consciousness was really a complex process of brain neurons firing and so on would be, for Sartre, to return consciousness to the mute plenitude of being. For Sartre, consciousness is not reducible in this way. However, while refusing to reduce consciousness to something else, Sartre also believes that he can surmount the difficulties which tripped up Descartes. To Sartre, the human being or for-itself is wholly body and wholly consciousness.[104] Let us now examine how he attempts to demonstrate this.

Consciousness, Sartre has told us, is causa sui. Given the fact of its existence, while it exists it is a break with mute being, a free reference to self. However, Sartre also sees consciousness as being consciousness on the ground of "facticity."[105] Consciousness did not magically create itself out of non-existence. It is not its own foundation. As a matter of contingent fact, there is consciousness. The for-itself did not ask to be born, it finds itself "thrown into a world and abandoned in a situation."[106] This is the facticity of consciousness: while it exists it is a causa sui reference to self but it did not originally found its own existence or create itself. The for-itself, then, is as contingent as being-in-itself. "We appear to ourselves as

having the character of an unjustifiable fact."[107] We too are "de trop."[108] It is this realisation that we are not our own foundation that Sartre sees as the underlying truth of Descartes' second proof of God's existence.[109]

The body, for Sartre, is an aspect of the facticity of the for-itself. The for-itself, he says, is its own nothingness. But nothingness has to be nothingness <u>of being</u> and has to be nothingized by a being. This is the human being, being-for-itself. Facticity entails that consciousness arises as the embodied consciousness of being-for-itself. Sartre's previously intimated view that consciousness has to be <u>of something</u> and that it could not be so without relation to transcendent being would already entail that consciousness has to be embodied. A disembodied consciousness would have no way of relating to being, it would have no way of being conscious of anything.

But how is consciousness embodied? Sartre is fully aware of the "ghost in the machine" difficulty of Descartes. The physiologists have studied the physical body and the laws of its operations. Sartre actually admits the implausibility of uniting a mental entity to this physical body:

> "if after grasping "my" consciousness in its absolute interiority and by a series of reflective acts, I then seek to unite it with a certain living object composed of a nervous system, a brain, glands, digestive, respiratory and circulatory organs whose very matter is capable of being analysed chemically into atoms of hydrogen, carbon, nitrogen, phosphorus, etc., then I am going to encounter insurmountable difficulties."[110]

However, this is not Sartre's capitulation to physicalism. It is this very view of the body from the standpoint of physiology that Sartre challenges. Not that Sartre is going to deny what physiology has discovered about the body, that I have endocrine glands, etc. I have read about the physiological body in books and a surgeon may have shown me an x-ray picture is of my body. The knowledge of the physiological body is secondary, that is not the body as it is for me. I do not normally see my endocrine glands.[111] The physiological body is the body of others, the body investigated in its aspect as a physical thing viewed from the outside. The difficulties of uniting consciousness with the body stem from concentrating on this view of the body. Physiological knowledge has its place but it is a static kind of study of the body. It isolates the body from its situation of being a living, acting human being to concentrate on its internal physical goings-on. To study the relation of consciousness to the body we must study the body as it is for me, my body as I experience it immediately.

Sartre takes the example of a doctor examining one's wounded leg while one sits up on the bed looking. Sartre claims that here "there is no essential difference between the doctor's perception of <u>my</u> leg and my own present perception of it."[112] But is there not a difference in my situation from that of the doctor in that it is <u>my</u> leg and I can feel it? I could feel my leg being touched. Sartre readily admits this but what he wants to get at is the difference between observation itself of one's body and being that body "in action"

perceiving, moving, etc. Cold or a shot of morphine could remove the feeling from my leg, leaving me with the perception of it only.[113] This perception is of the same nature as the doctor's: it is perception of an object in the midst of the world. That I can see parts of my body is a contingent fact of my biological make-up. It would be possible - as with a certain species of insect Sartre informs us of - to have a body so constructed that the organism could not see any part of itself.[114] Or at the opposite extreme, it would be possible to have a body such that with one eye I could see the other.[115] But I would see only an object-eye, as distinct from my experience of <u>seeing</u> with the eye. Perception of the body <u>per se</u> is of an object.

For Sartre, then, there is an important distinction to be made between, on the one hand, the way I immediately experience my body and, on the other hand, my observation of my body or of the body of another (or another's observation of my body). In the above example, I explicitly observe my wounded leg as this physical object being worked on. Observing another's body, I may, for example, see the person using his or her arm to pull a chair towards him or her.[116] But my body as I immediately experience it is not an observed object or an instrument I use. The body is not, here, an object I confront and then use. My experience of my body is not that of being a ghost pilot operating the body-machine.

Sartre's way of putting it is that I "live"[117] or "exist"[118] my body. My body, as perceiving and acting, is my point of view on the world and an instrument of action. But it is the

body which I am. The point of view is the point of view which I am, the point of view on which I cannot have a point of view. I immediately see objects, I do not "see the seeing."[119] It is not like using an object, I am the seeing. Or in action, my hand is not an external tool which I then take up and use. I am my hand so that in writing, for example, I do not have to pay explicit attention to it: "I do not apprehend my hand in the act of writing... I am my hand."[120] The pen is the tool which I use.

I perceive and act towards things in the world. This world of things is such a world from my bodily point of view. My body is the centre of reference of the world. But it is the centre which I immediately am, so that I do not ordinarily give reflective attention to it. It is indicated, says Sartre, by a sort of gap.[121]

For an illustration of this we can think of the type of scene in a film where, for example, a killer is stalking his or her victim but we do not see the killer. Instead all we see is what the killer sees as he or she slowly approaches the victim. Or alternatively, we are identified with the unseen hunted person and we see what he or she sees from the vantage point behind the crack of an opening in the cupboard door. The objects seen refer back to the unseen centre of reference.

For Sartre, then, the human being is neither a pure spirit nor merely the physiological body nor even an addition of the two. Consciousness "exists its body."[122] The body is a

structure of consciousness. And more specifically, it "belongs to the structure of non-thetic self-consciousness"[123] since it is not primarily an object of reflection. However, paradoxically, due to this very fact that the body is not reflectively attended to, the body cannot simply be identified with non-thetic self-consciousness. I live my body as I carry out my activities in the world. So I pass over my body towards the world. E.g. I surpass my hand towards the writing of this piece:

> "Non-positional consciousness is consciousness (of the) body as being that which it surmounts and nihilates by making itself consciousness - i.e. as being something which consciousness has to be without having to be it and <u>which it passes over</u> in order to be what it has to be...consciousness of the body is lateral and retrospective; the body is the neglected, the "<u>passed by in silence</u>." And yet the body is what this consciousness <u>is</u>: it is not even anything except body. The rest is nothingness and silence."[124]

Consciousness "has to be the body" in the sense that it is embodied and has to be, it cannot choose not to be body. But then consequently it is this body "without having to be it" in that the body is its unavoidable facticity unlike the various projects consciousness undertakes, with which it cannot be solidly identified. It "has to be" the project in the sense of actively making itself such, passing over it to those projects which I actively "have to be" (using "to be" in a sense like that of "to make.") The body is what consciousness "is" in the sense that the body is a graspable thing whereas consciousness is nothingness, the break with

being that allows the for-itself to pass over its body to its projects.

It is because I live and pass over my body that Sartre includes his discussion of it in the section on being-for-others. The issue of the body arises when we take the other's point of view on the body and observe it as a physical object.

Sartre's conception of the relationship between consciousness and the body is, I believe, of great significance in attempting to reach an understanding of what the human being is. Sartre starts off from our experience of ourselves as being immediately both conscious and bodily beings. Sartre's notion of the lived body does seem to accurately describe to us our experience however this experience is to be explained. I do not experience myself as a ghost operating the body-machine nor as a purely physical thing (in which case I would not have an experience anyway). I am this hand which is writing. That is, it is immediately me that is writing. I am this acting body conscious of itself. I am a physical being that acts but I <u>am</u> immediately the performing of my acts, I am conscious and my acts mean something to me. Before we try to find explanations for our experience, then, within that experience one appears to oneself as a conscious bodily unity which is a point of view on the world, an experiencing centre.

Now in trying to explain this experience both the Cartesian and the physicalist step outside this unity to examine its

different aspects. From this centripetal perspective, rather than the centrifugal perspective of the experiencing person, the unity breaks up before the very eyes of the Cartesian and the physicalist. That is, from the outside they see the completely physical body with its complex physiology and cannot observe "consciousness" there. But they still have the evidence of their conscious experience. To Descartes this evidence is there, it cannot be denied. I think and I cannot ignore this. Yet the contrary evidence presents itself to him from the external perspective on the body: the body is this purely physical thing which can be dissected in the laboratory. To resolve the two sides to each other Descartes posits the existence of this other type of substance, the mental entity or soul, that is joined to the physical body. But this leaves us with the problem of how such an ethereal substance can exist and be joined to the physical body.

The physicalist also has the evidence of his or her conscious experience but places trust primarily in the physical observation of the body. Therefore he or she tries to explain consciousness in terms of the physical. Consciousness simply <u>is</u> the complex central nervous system or it is a causal process just like that present in the chess-playing computer which is a purely physical thing yet has the "mental" capacity to engage in such activities as playing chess. However, such views attempt to explain <u>away</u> consciousness. The occurrences themselves of brain neurons firing or of computer circuits operating are purely physical occurrences. Yet we still have our experience of ourselves

as consciously acting, thinking and so on as such, the physical explanations do not account for my experience to me in my experience. It seems, then, that we are placed in a trap where we have to choose between two equally inadequate options.

At this juncture it is possible to view Sartre's theory of the conscious bodily human being as a balanced approach which offers us a way out of the trap. Sartre starts off from reflection on our conscious experience. Sartre wants to examine this experience and explain what it is and how it operates. But he first of all accepts consciousness as consciousness and does not try to reduce it to something else. One could view this as a "truer empiricism" than that of a physicalist theory. I experience myself as conscious and no translation of this experience into the physical goings-on inside my body can satisfy me within my experience. I experience myself as consciousness as such. So it could be held that it is quite reasonable to accept the evidence of our experience that the human being is conscious as such. That is, however it is possible, the human being has consciousness which is an actual aspect of the human being capable of being treated in its own terms.

Sartre proceeds to step outside the immediate unity of our conscious experience to examine how it is possible. But Sartre keeps in mind this unity and returns to it with his discoveries. He looks at how consciousness is possible but regards the grounds of its possibility as giving rise to consciousness as such rather than as an explanation which

displaces consciousness. I am conscious. I have to be consciousness of something and I must have a way of being conscious. My way of being conscious is as existing the body. So of course the central nervous system and its operations are involved. But we do not have to reduce consciousness to this. The human body is of this physical structure and with this central nervous system and so on which gives rise to the unity of the body, consciousness. The body is of such a nature that the level of consciousness is reached. Consciousness is not simply to be identified with the physiological processes in the body which make it possible: the whole point of the level of consciousness being reached is to be something more than just ignorant physicality. The human being is treated under this approach neither as a purely physical automaton nor as a body-machine joined to an ethereal "soul" entity. We accept the human being as at once a finite biological existence which is at the same time run through by the conscious unity it is the occasion of. We have here a balanced approach which allows us to study the human being in all its aspects, "physical" and "mental," an approach which presents to us the whole conscious bodily human being.

It is possible, I believe, to retrospectively view Sartre's pre-BN works as concrete applications of this approach to the study of consciousness and the human being and as evidence of its practical usefulness. This issue will be more fully elaborated on in Part Two but let us briefly consider it here. To take first his Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, Sartre there examines the type of position in which as

outburst of emotion is viewed simply as being physiological changes in the body. But Sartre notes that anger and joy entail almost the same physiological changes.[125] Yet the experiences of joy and anger do seem to have essential meaningful differences. A study of the emotions that said joy and anger were simply similar but slightly differing physiological changes in the body would not seem to be very informative. Sartre instead accepts the anger and joy as meaningful affective operations of the conscious bodily human being. Physiological changes such as the quickening of the heart-beat, reddening of the face, laughing, etc. are brought under the unity of the conscious emotional bodily human being. These are the way one lives and fully believes one's emotions. I will not here go into whether or not Sartre's interpretation of what each type of emotion means is correct but what we can say, I believe, is that his general approach allows us to study the emotions in all their aspects, the "mental" and the "physical."

Sartre gives the mental image the same treatment in his work, The Psychology of Imagination. Here he tries to describe our imaging experience and then apply explanatory analysis to it in such a way that the explanation is integrated with the description rather than presenting us with an "illusory experience with scientific explanation behind it" scenario. When I form a mental image - of an absent friend, for example - however I accomplish it, I do have the experience of mentally "viewing" my friend. Sartre starts from this base of accepting the experience as such but allows for open examination of how the experience is accomplished. Sartre's

conclusion is that there is not any actual physical or mystical picture which is "in" the head. Nevertheless the experience is not to be denied. The experience is accomplished by a synthesis of one's knowledge of the imagined object, the affective sense one has of it, the kinaesthetic movement by which one mimes it and one's acting towards all this as if it were the object present.

The body too, then, is part of this process for Sartre. Sartre gives his own experience as an example; he was imagining a swing swinging and found that his eyes swung to and fro.[126] The body's kinaesthetic movement is used in the synthesis of the image. Here Sartre examines how we mentally image things. He openly uses analytic detective work but at the same time places his discoveries back within the unity of the experience rather than using them to debunk our experience. Whatever way we accomplish the experience, it "does the trick" and delivers to us an imaginary view of our intended object.

It is possible also, I believe, to see the practical usefulness of Sartre's approach specifically in relation to consciousness itself. In BN and the antecedent works, Sartre accepts consciousness in its own terms as a meaningful reference to self. But, as we observed earlier, he does not portray consciousness as a ready-made contemplative ego. So whether we are examining a spontaneous outburst of emotion, a dream, contemplative reflection or whatever, Sartre is able to accept that these are meaningful experiences for consciousness but at the same time he is able to allow for

the "facticity" of consciousness so as to study it under the particular mode of operation it is engaged in at the time.

To take the example of the dreaming consciousness from The Psychology of Imagination,[127] Sartre studies the dream as a meaningful operation of consciousness. The dream is fully the product of consciousness. But Sartre does not pretend that there is a contemplating ego there coolly writing the dream story and then enacting it in the dream. Sartre examines the particular mode of consciousness of the dreamer: it is a pre-reflective and "neutral" mode in which all "thought" takes place immediately in the form of the pictured events of the dream story. Similarly in the Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, Sartre studies one's emotional outburst as a meaningful operation of consciousness but one in which consciousness has stepped down from a rational level to a level of spontaneous "magical" action as if this could transform the situation[128] (e.g. in my own case, waving my fist in the air and shouting a demand to the late absent train to hurry up and appear). And generally in BN, Sartre with his notion of pre-reflective consciousness, is able to study our everyday activities - such as opening a door or walking down a street - as meaningful to consciousness without any ridiculous transformation of these activities into high contemplation. Sartre has reached a balance where he can study the whole concrete conscious bodily human being in all its types of activities, from the most spontaneous act to the most contemplative reflection.

The usefulness of Sartre's approach to the conscious bodily human being could also be seen, I believe, as being evidenced in his treatment of the senses, historically a great problem for philosophy and which he deals with in the chapter on the body in BN. This is perhaps the most compelling example in showing the advantage of Sartre's procedure of focusing on the human being's experience for itself and then integrating with this experience any discoveries about how it is possible.

Sartre describes the sensation of the usual scientific view as "sensation ... inside the box."[129] It may be useful to take another look at John Locke's philosophy as an early example of this type of view and one which throws up certain difficulties Sartre tries to dispel with his approach.

For John Locke, sensation was a case of the external world acting on the senses of the human being, causing in the mind ideas of the objects in the external world. The difficulty that arises is that Locke is imprisoned within his sensation. All he has is the "image in his head" (or sensation inside the box). He has a "copy" of the external world but no proof that the copy is accurate or even that there actually is an external world to copy.

In contrast, Sartre - in rather vitriolic fashion - attacks the whole idea of sensation. He derides it as:

> "a hybrid notion between the subjective and the objective, conceived from the standpoint of the object and applied subsequently to the subject, a bastard

> existence which we can not say whether it exists in fact or in theory - sensation is a pure daydream of the psychologist. It must be deliberately rejected by any serious theory concerning the relations between consciousness and the world." [130]

Why such a spirited attack on the idea of sensation? After all, we cannot very well deny that we have bodies such that we have the senses of sight, touch, hearing, etc. Fair enough, but what Sartre is attacking is the tendency - as epitomised by John Locke - to study sensation outwith the unity of the conscious bodily human being. For example, light may be studied in terms of light hitting the retina of the eye, the receiving of an image and so on. This is studying the body of the other once again and not sight as it is for me. What is objectively discovered about how seeing is possible is not reintegrated into our overall experience of seeing. Instead it is identified as being what seeing "really is." Thus we are left with the Locke-type trinity of the subject, the real external world and the mediation of sensation to give the former information of the latter.

Sartre instead puts the senses within the framework of the relationship of the conscious human being and the world. In Sartre's framework, the for-itself by being conscious of being makes the latter a world. The whole system is contingent but given that it exists I have to have some way of being conscious of being. As a matter of fact, the way I am able to be conscious is as this type of body with its type of senses. But, in accord with the notion of the body as it is for me, or "body-for-itself"[131] as Sartre puts it at one point, the senses are not instruments I use to receive

"sensations" like getting a reading on a scanner. E.g. I do not see perceptions or examine visual sensations - I see things. "Senses are everywhere," Sartre says, "yet everywhere inapprehensible."[132] I live my body with its senses so that I relate to the objective world which I encounter in this process rather than to the senses themselves.

To focus on the case of visual perception, I do not here pay attention to the sense of sight. I simply see objects. Now I have to see them from perspective; I cannot see them all at once nor see all sides of an object at once and there is an infinity of ways an object can appear. But my perception is not then a subjective distortion. The world is not "like" anything in itself for me to distort. This is the nature of the world and objects for me as a seeing conscious human being. The rules of appearance are objective and derive from the nature of things. The world is such that an inkwell hides a portion of the table on which it is placed. Or to take a more instructive example:

> "if the object gets smaller when moving away, we must not explain this by some kind of illusion in the observer but by the strictly external laws of perspective."[133]

The house in the distance may cast a small image on my retina but it is not a small image I perceive. I live my sensory organs so that my "sensation" is a direct relating to objects. I perceive, then, not a small image but, rather, a large house in the distance.

I am conscious of the world, not of my body's senses. But the world refers back to me as the (bodily) centre of reference. The visual, auditory, tactile world refer back to me as this conscious seeing hearing touching human being. Or if someone is blind, the world is referred back to him or her as an auditory, tactile world.[134] That is the way the world is for him or her. To take another case, if I have sore eyes the world refers back to me as this objective world in which it is difficult to read and so on.[135] I relate to a world which is objective, even though it refers back to me as the experiencing centre without whom it would not be this way. This entails that the objects I perceive are not just blandly noted to be there. Perception of the world pre-figures my possible actions. E.g. seeing the cup from only this perspective refers me to the possible action of lifting up the cup to see its bottom.[136]

In general, then, Sartre studies sensation within the context of the experiencing conscious human being or for-itself, returning sensation to the unity from which Locke plucked it. Since, under Sartre's view, I <u>am</u> the perceiving, Locke's difficulty of the subject using the sense-tool to receive a questionable image from the external world is avoided.

1.7 THE FOR-ITSELF AND THE WORLD

We have now travelled a long way with Sartre. First of all we met him studying the human being as consciousness. What lay behind this was attention to the experiencing aspect of the human being. I can point to myself as having this

feature of not just being an ignorant object but being someone who is a centre of experience. One could try to explain how this experiencing consciousness was possible but it was not acceptable to explain it away; whatever explanation was attempted I would still have my conscious experience. Sartre then pointed out that consciousness is primarily pre-reflective; I am this experiencing consciousness for whom the world has meaning and this applies whether I act with spontaneity or deliberate reflection. Sartre then inferred that consciousness was a relation to a transcendent being. Its negation of this being made the latter properly a world. What lay behind this was the reflection on our experience which told us two things: firstly, the world I experience does not just arrange itself according to my whim, at its basis is something out there independent of me without which I would not have anything to be conscious of; and, secondly, the world nevertheless would not be the "world" outside my experience, it is not "like" anything in itself outside someone's experience of it. Sartre has now told us that this negating consciousness is the immediately embodied consciousness of the concrete human being or for-itself.

Gathering all this together, it is possible to view the emergent Sartrean picture of the human being for itself and the world as a balanced one avoiding both idealism and realism. The human being is neither viewed as having a mysterious soul nor as being a biological automaton. As regards the world, this is neither regarded as a deliberate ideal construct nor as simply being there that way as if the

human being played no part in the way the world appears to him or her. The human being is seen, rather, as a conscious bodily unity, this concrete living experiencing centre. It lives and operates in this concrete world which puts up resistance to us but which only is this auditory visual tactile world through our consciousness of it. We are presented with a truer empiricism in which the conditions of the existence of consciousness are recognized - embodied existence in a world - but in which our own conscious experience of living in these conditions can be accepted and not explained away. We are talking of the concrete conscious human being, a physical being living in the physical world but doing so as a conscious unity. Sartre has talked of consciousness as negating being, as conscious of itself as not being the in-itself and so on. But armed now with Sartre's conception of consciousness as the pre-reflective conscious "existed" body relating to the independent realm of being as an objective world, we can see now that this negating activity is not some ideal deliberative thought-operation - it takes place as this conscious life of the concrete human being in the world. Sartre can now go into more detail on the subject of consciousness's negation of being and formation of it into a world with the understanding that this takes place within the concrete for-itself/world relation. He attempts this in the chapter on "Transcendence,"[137] the general term by which Sartre denotes the idea of consciousness going beyond itself to be conscious of being.

We have already seen Sartre's requirement that if the for-itself is to have any relationship with being rather than being enmired in the latter it must be conscious of itself as separate from being. So, for Sartre, the for-itself is conscious of itself as not being the in-itself. Sartre now describes this as an "internal"[138] and "radical"[139] negation. "Internal" in that one of the terms of the negation is the for-itself itself. The for-itself defines itself by this negation. It is the for-itself's existence not to be being.

Now being as it is in itself simply <u>is</u>. In its plenitude it has no need of the negating activity of the for-itself whereas the for-itself requires being to be conscious of. Being as it is in itself is not "like" anything. It is beyond all such descriptions without any consciousness there to view it in any such way or in any way at all. The internal negation is, consequently, "radical" in that it is the for-itself's negating consciousness of being that for the first time makes the latter "like" something and makes it able to be seen as a totality. My being conscious of it makes it "there" for me. The for-itself is responsible for the way "there is" being for it. [140]. But this is not a case of a false appearance behind which lies the way being <u>really</u> is. Being as it is in itself is not they way it appears to me - but it is not anything else! The for-itself is conscious of transcendent being and the fact that it is conscious from its point of view is part and parcel of being conscious. That is the way being is there for us but it is nevertheless still being that one is conscious of. One does not complain that one is not hearing music directly because

one has to hear it through notes. This negating conscious relation to being takes place as our everyday consciousness of the world.

If the internal negation of being is expressed by our everyday consciousness of the world then this internal negation is matched correlatively by an "external" negation in Sartre's terminology.[141] This negation is external in that this time it does not define the for-itself but is the negation by which the for-itself can see one object as a "this," a particular thing. This is a negation because to determine a "this" one has to set it out as not being anything else. So the external negation is that by which the different "thises" are set out as not being each other.

Sartre has made this distinction between internal and external negation but - in accordance with the notion that the negation of being takes place within the concrete relation of the for-itself and the world - these negations cannot be two absolutely separate negations carried out one after another. Sartre uses the word "correlative."[142] An even stronger unity is suggested by how he deals with negation. The external negation can be seen as an aspect of the internal negation or vice versa. Of the this, Sartre says that the for-itself has to see it on the ground of totality.[143] One has to see a this (external negation) on the ground of the totality of being which one negates (internal negation). The external negation requires the internal negation. Reciprocally, since the for-itself has to have a point of view on being, it requires to effect the

internal negation by external negations, by relating to individual things and events. This reciprocity and complementarity of the two aspects of negation is well illustrated by Sartre in the field of perception. An individual perception of some object requires the world as a foundation, I have to pick out the perceived figure from its ground. Reciprocally, I never perceive the world in its entirety, it is revealed concretely as the ground of my individual perceptions.[144]

Earlier we saw how, for Sartre, the internal negation defines the for-itself. The internal negation's relation to the external negation also implies, then, something about the way the for-itself is defined. Sartre, in this regard, describes the for-itself as a "detotalized" totality of negations.[145] The for-itself accomplishes the total negation of being through its individual concrete negations. I go on making these concrete individual negations (until death) so that I never achieve an absolute closed totality with which I can be solidly identified. "I both am and am not the total negation," Sartre says.[146] While I live I continually make new negations. Each negation is part of the totality, an operation of the one for-itself, but I still have to go on to the next negation. The totality is an open "detotalized" totality.

The internal cum external negation is, then, Sartre's account of the genesis of the world as one I can relate to. It is the genesis of how for the human being or for-itself the world is a world rather than a mute plenitude with no-one to

be related to. And this activity is not a simple affair. Sartre looks into the various complexities the for-itself is engaged in to make the world the world it is. For example, the spatio-temporal milieu in which we relate to objects is such a milieu only for the for-itself. Being as it is in itself has no-one to relate to it in these terms. And to take the individual "thises" we relate to, seeing a this, when one examines it closely, involves many aspects. We have seen how, for Sartre, relating to a this involves negation, setting out the boundaries outwith which "is not" the this. But the boundary-setting is not a simple pencilling-in of lines. To see an object as that object involves, for one thing, perceiving its permanence as the same object continuing over time.[147]

Sartre also points out that abstraction is involved. Here we can recall Hegel's attack on the "sense-certainty" position which held that one just stood there with open senses and a pre-packed, unadulterated world flooded in. Hegel, in contrast, pointed to the activity needed to perceive a this (use of universals and so on).[148] Sartre points to the abstractions already in an object through us. E.g. this green object. Sartre says that "the green never <u>is</u> green.[149] That is, there is no fixed epitome of green-ness in the world. There are the individual greens, the green objects I see. It is the for-itself which has to identify a universal quality, greenness, and set the object off as being of that quality.

However, all this activity of consciousness in forming being into a world is not some reflective stage by stage "mind game." This negating activity of consciousness in forming the world is what, on reflection, we are able to decipher from our conscious experiencing of the world. it is what we do but we do it as a pre-reflective embodied consciousness immediately relating to transcendent being. Being consequently appears to us as an objective world within the circuit of selfness.[150] Thus my relation to a "this" is not to some made-up image. An object such as a lemon, for example, appears not as a summation of separate qualities but as a total unity in which all the qualities interpenetrate and <u>are</u> the object:

> "the yellow of the lemon is not a subjective mode of apprehending the lemon; it <u>is</u> the lemon. And it is not true that the object x appears as the empty form which holds together disparate qualities. In fact, the lemon is extended throughout its qualities, and each of its qualities is extended throughout each of the others. it is the sourness of the lemon which is yellow, it is the yellow of the lemon which is sour."[151]

The for-itself's consciousness of being is the foundation of the whole situation. The for-itself is conscious (from its point of view) of being (in the form of the world) and it is only on the foundation of this relationship that there can be any subjectivity or objectivity. The for-itself with nothing to be conscious of would not exist (no subject) and being with no-one to be conscious of it would not be an objectivity, it would have no-one to view it as such. The world appears as an objective world in Sartre's framework

since the world is independent being as I am conscious of it. And I am conscious of the world, not reflectively constructing it. I am aware of this concrete world of objects. My consciousness is part of what makes the world a world but this process lies within the non-reflective unity of the situation. The internal cum external negation belongs to the structures of non-thetic consciousness. My making the world a world is my everyday dealing with it.

We have now, then, examined the process by which, according to Sartre, the for-itself relates to transcendent being thereby allowing the for-itself to be a subject and making being take the form of an objective world. However, we may still here be left with a few philosophical ambiguities. On the one hand, Sartre seems to identify the world with being since the former is the form in which I am conscious of the latter. Also, Sartre will call individual objects "in-itselfs." On the other hand, being as it is in itself independently of the for-itself, according to Sartre, does not have any form so that in that sense the world is not to be identified with being. Being-in-itself is indifferent to the world-form in which the for-itself in conscious of it. The way being "is there" for us is, then, contingent and the external negations which determine the way it is there for us are branded as "ideal" by Sartre in that they do not affect being as it is in itself.[152] This contingency of form was part of the subject-matter of Sartre's novel "Nausea" in which the main character, Roquentin, begins to see the everyday objects in the world which he had taken for granted as peculiar and surprising.[153] And in BN, Sartre says that

the notion of beauty stems from the impossible ideal of a "this" whose form is totally necessary and unchangeable. This is the ideal of the this/essence fusion.[154] This ideality of the world contrasts with the objectivity Sartre gives it as in the example of the lemon. Also, if being-in-itself is an undifferentiated plenitude, how can we talk of particular objects as individual in-itselfs? What are we to make of these ambiguities?

First of all, to Sartre, the human situation of consciously living in a world which is objective but in which we play a part in making it so is itself ambiguous. And as Jeanson puts it, "given an ambiguous reality, an ambiguous method is alone suitable."[155] Transcendent being outside our relation to it does not have the world-form it has for us, it is completely undifferentiated. At the same time, however, the world is not an illusion behind which lies transcendent being. The world is being as I directly relate to it just as in the discussion of the senses it was said that my seeing an object is my relating directly to it rather than a perusal of an image of an object. So in this sense the world is transcendent being. The latter cannot appear in any other way. We are able to view the world as differentiated into various things and parts such as a mountain for example. Being itself does not know this differentiation, only through the for-itself's relation to being can the mountain appear as a mountain. But at the same time being is the ground with its resistance and so on which we need to be able to see a mountain. There is something in being which makes it pliable to our differentiation even though it cannot know this

itself. After all, we cannot simply choose that the mountain should disappear. So seeing the mountain is a relation to an objective thing while at the same time being is oblivious to this differentiation and is beyond caring even suppose this mountain be reduced to scattered rubble by an earthquake. In this sense, the world-form is contingent.

Sartre allows himself some flexibility in the use of his concepts to cope with this complex relation of the for-itself to being. The term "in-itself" is used by Sartre firstly to denote being as it would be outside of human consciousness of it. But he also uses it more generally of the particular object one is conscious of (such as the mountain) which is transcendent being (which in itself simply is itself) as I relate to it. He also uses the term "in-itself" to denote any type of object which the for-itself is conscious of and which is thereby an inert object in comparison to consciousness. E.g. the ego is, for Sartre, a passive in-itself, an object with no creativity of its own and which is formulated by consciousness.

1.8 THE QUESTION OF THE "AS IF"

We have now, then, I hope, reached an understanding of Sartre's approach as a balanced one which gives us the practical means to study fully the human being and the world. However, before we draw this chapter to a close, there is a final, or perhaps the ultimate, problematical issue to consider. We have been trying to reach an understanding of what the human being and the world are but we could now turn to question why and how this whole system came into

existence. Why and how did being come into existence and why and how did it give rise to the existence of the for-itself or human being?

Up till now we have been examining the human being and the world and, given that they are in existence, asking what precisely they are. That, for Sartre, lies in the field of ontology and he has attempted to provide answers by reflecting on our experience of ourselves as human beings in the world. But now we are going beyond ontology and what can be answered by phenomenological reflection to ask why and how being came into existence and why and how it gave rise to the for-itself. This, for Sartre, lies in the field of metaphysics which "is to ontology as history is to sociology."[156]

For Sartre, metaphysics is a rather constrained area. It cannot succeed as a vehicle to transport us outside the for-itself - world relation to validate any hypotheses about why and how being exists and gives rise to the for-itself. All it can do is take the discoveries ontology has made and offer hypotheses to unify these discoveries, without these hypotheses being capable of any further validation.[157]

Sartre's phenomenological ontology has posited three main regions of being: the in-itself or transcendent being, the for-itself, and the ideal being of the in-itself-for-itself or ens causa sui.[158] The for-itself to exist has to be consciousness of transcendent being while the latter only is the world through the for-itself's consciousness of it.

However, transcendent being is the independent realm outside me which I bump up against and which does not need me to hold it in being, it just is and does not in itself require someone to view it as a world. So the for-itself and the in-itself are inseparable from the point of view of the for-itself but not from the side of the in-itself. In this sense the for-itself and the in-itself do no constitute a proper totality.[159] The for-itself is conscious of itself and constitutes a break from being. It has the ideal of remaining conscious and at the same time achieving fullness of being. That is, it has the ideal of becoming in-itself-for-itself. But this is not possible because consciousness is essentially negativity and withdrawal from being so that to reach a point of satisfaction and solidity would be to smooth out the negative and end consciousness.

If being-in-itself were in some way to "attempt" to get out of its contingent state of simply being and instead become ens causa sui it would have to make itself conscious of itself. And according to Sartre the for-itself is, indeed, a consciousness of the in-itself and has itself the ideal of being in-itself-for-itself. This would imply that the in-itself was already conscious and had for itself the project of founding itself. Nothing allows us to say this, according to Sartre, from our ontological discoveries. We are conscious of the in-itself and it is we who make it a world for ourselves and who formulate the very idea of foundation. Therefore, within the field of ontology, Sartre limits himself to declaring that "every thing takes place as if the

in-itself in a project to found itself gave itself the modification of the for-itself."[160]

But everything also takes place as if this project fails or only partially succeeds. It gives rise to the for-itself which is conscious of the in-itself - but which is a distinct entity, a negation of the in-itself, something separate from the in-itself. Transcendent being lacks consciousness. It then gives rise to the for-itself. But instead of this meaning that the in-itself is then conscious of itself - in-itself-for-itself - there is a separate entity, the for-itself, which is conscious of the in-itself but which on its side, as a negation of the in-itself, lacks fullness of being and has in its turn the ideal of becoming in-itself-for-itself. Instead of this ideal being realised we are presented with a "detotalized totality,"[161] to use that term once again, of the in-itself and the for-itself. So Sartre's metaphysical suggestion is to think of the for-itself and the in-itself as a "disintegrated totality," a failed in-itself-for-itself or <u>ens causa sui,</u> although we cannot suppose that the totality was ever achieved in the first place:

> "the real is an abortive effort to attain to the dignity of the self-cause. Everything happens as if the world, man, and man-in-the-world succeeded in realising only a missing God. Everything happens therefore as if the in-itself and the for-itself were presented in a state of disintegration in relation to an ideal synthesis. Not that the integration has ever <u>taken place</u> but on the contrary precisely because it is always indicated and always impossible."[162]

With his notion here that it is as if the in-itself in a project to found itself gave rise to the for-itself, Sartre is allowing in some way for the idea of the unity of a process in the universe leading from ignorant being to the conscious for-itself. When we consider the human being's facticity as situated in this universe it would appear that we are compelled to reach some conception of such a process. Looking at the universe starting from the Big Bang, going on to the formation of the planets and solar systems and the evolution of life on Earth leading eventually to the human being, it seems evident that in some way "everything is connected to everything else." We have, in fact, already been pointed in this direction in examining Sartre's ontological vision in which consciousness is the embodied consciousness of being-for-itself, a consciousness which emerges from and requires being. There are two main paths we could be tempted to take in a search for the answer to this question of how everything is connected to everything else and of where the human being fits in. One of these paths is that of the physicalist. A physicalist, such as Armstrong, who identified human consciousness with the central nervous system, could view the human being as the climax of the purely physical processes of the universe, a realm of various purely physical objects of increasing degrees of complexity. Here the human being is integrated within the process of the universe as one physical object among others and has no special status.[163]

I have already attempted to show that human consciousness cannot be reduced in this way. We are still left with our

own conscious experience as such and no translation of it into physical terms can satisfy us within our experience. A "truer empiricism" would be to accept that the human being's bodily existence is the ground of its consciousness but also to accept that consciousness is thereby reached as something distinct from a mere sum of physical events.[164] If in this way we accept the human being as a distinct conscious existence then we in a sense break up the process of the universe as a purely physical one. The Sartrean conscious human being is by its consciousness separate from the rest of the universe.

We could then follow the other path in attempting to account for how everything is connected to everything. Here we would view the universe as in some way a project towards producing consciousness. The human being would be seen as the universe come to knowledge of itself. Sartre edges towards this type of view with his idea that it is as if the in-itself in a project to found itself gave rise to the for-itself. However, Sartre draws back from completely accepting it by inserting his "as if" clause. The emergence of the human being is "like" the universe coming to know itself but not in a complete sense. Sartre injects an element of separation into the system. The for-itself depends on being so that it is part of a process but being does not likewise need the for-itself. The for-itself is a break in the system. Sartre does not present us with a smooth even continuum.

Why should we retain the "as if," rendering our theory incomplete as it does and leaving an element of the

unexplainable? Hegel's view of the universal Geist, for example, dispenses with the "as if" and attempts to encapsulate everything within the necessary development of Geist. In this respect, the Sartrean universe is like a Hegelian universe infected with contingency and with a fault-line through its heart. Hegel does not acknowledge a fault-line; there is contingency within the Hegelian system and individual conscious existents must pass away to be replaced by others but the whole system is necessary and is the universal Geist coming to know itself.

However, there is in the Hegelian system, in my view, an unresolved problem concerning the universal Geist. The universal Geist is conceived of as having its existence through the development of the universe and through the various "shapes" the human being and human society goes through (senses-certainty, perception and so on, the master-slave dialectic, the various forms of ethical life etc.)[165] The universal Geist <u>is</u> the process of the development of these formations. This is a very fruitful perspective in supplying us with a unity within which we can examine what a situation feels like for an individual conscious existent but within which we can also study the lines of development of this situation which the conscious existent is not aware of itself. The problem I see, however, is that both the individual existent and the Geist are said to be actual realities. There could be some unsatisfactory ambiguity here. What explicitly is the relationship between the universal Geist and the individual conscious existent? If there is no "as if" in the system it would seem that we must

say that the universal Geist for-itself is actually conscious. I am explicitly conscious of myself too, yet the universal Geist which is conscious of itself has its form through me and the unity of all the shapes it goes through.

It seems to me that without an "as if" there is an insurmountable difficulty in the identity of an individual conscious existent with the universal Geist. This identification, in my view, would mean either one or the other of two things. It must mean that I am swallowed up in the universal Geist in which case I lose my existence as a distinct consciousness in my own right. But then this runs contrary to my own experience of myself as a distinct conscious entity. Alternatively, if we insist that the individual conscious existent does not lose its distinctness then we are left with the grave problem - analogous to the difficulties in Christian theology of conceiving God as a Trinity of three distinct individuals who are also the one entity - of trying to conceive how multiple distinct individual consciousnesses can also be part of a universal consciousness.

Sartre is attempting to build his theory strictly on the basis of human experience and coming from this basis he cannot accept a view of the human being as integrated within a universe of completed totality. He cannot accept that the in-itself is already a project towards human consciousness.

But surely the human being's emergence as part of the evolution of the universe would suggest that this is the

case? For Sartre, it does suggest the for-itself's facticity as emerging from being but still not the complete totality. I am conscious of transcendent being which, as far as I can tell, just happens to be there and I do not experience it as conscious in contrast with my experience of the other human being (which we will more fully examine later) whom I immediately can experience as a conscious other, as in Sartre's famous example of shame.[166]

Here I feel a shudder through my whole body when someone catches me in a compromising position such as spying on someone through a keyhole. I treat the person immediately as a conscious other whose view confronts me. I do not experience transcendent being in this way as a direct conscious other. Nor do I experience myself as integrated with it in a complete conscious totality. There must be something in being, some potentiality, which develops and culminates in the intelligent consciousness of the human being. But as far as we in our experience are concerned it is we who have to recognize this potentiality as such; we have no evidence of being itself as conscious.

Also, I experience myself as a conscious individual. I know that I am part of the wider universe and that the process of life preceded me and will continue after my death; yet, nevertheless, I am a conscious individual living this situation for me - the rest of the universe is not me and while the fact that the universe will continue after me may be of some comfort, I as an individual will be dead and there is no possible "higher resolution" for this situation.

Sartre, then, does seem correct to insert his "as if" clause into the equation. As the human being is part of the universe and springs forth from it, we could say in a sense that it is the universe come to knowledge of itself. But this will always be in a detotalized sense since the human being as a conscious individual has become in this way separated off from transcendent being. It is from this perspective of seeing the human being as a separate conscious individual that Sartre marks a sharp division between the in-itself and the for-itself.

Sartre's erstwhile co-worker, Merleau-Ponty, similarly views the human being as a conscious bodily unity but he at the same time avoids positing a hard and fast division between in-itself and for-itself. For Merleau-Ponty, as he sets out his position in The Structure of Behaviour,[167] the universe is a "universe of form"[168] and the human being is placed within it as inhabiting one of various dialectical levels of form. The solar system is a "proto-intentionality" and within the world there are various dialectical levels of organism. Merleau-Ponty is able to describe each form of life in its particularity. The most simple dialectical level of organism (that of the simplest insects and animals) is the "syncretic"[169] level in which the organism is imprisoned in the framework of its natural conditions. The next level is the "amovable"[170] level of higher animals like the chimpanzee, for example. It has a primitive form of instrumentality. It can, for example, pick up a branch and use it as a stick. But the chimpanzee has a "short and

heavy" manner of existence and adheres to the "here and now."[171] The branch becomes a stick and is only that.[172] The human being, on the other hand, reaches the "symbolic"[173] form of existence, a cognitive level in which the tree-branch will remain precisely a tree-branch-which-has-become-a-stick.[174] The behaviour of the human being is a form issuing from its existence as a conscious bodily unity in the world and is thus neither in itself nor for itself.

Merleau-Ponty may have an advantage there in presenting a less broken-up picture of the universe in which he can also take account of animal life as well as human life. Sartre, in fact, rarely mentions animals in BN.

In my view, what is required is a balanced approach which allows for the process leading up to the conscious human being but which also recognizes the human being's distinctness as a conscious individual once the human level is reached. The human being does emerge out of a continuous process of the evolution of life. But Sartre from his perspective of examining the life of the individual for-itself wants to explicitly point out what it is like to be a human being. This is to be a conscious individual who has a facticity as emerging out of the process of evolution but who cannot thereby find any refuge from his or her separateness and individuality. There is a place, then, I believe, for Sartre's "as if" in a balanced view of the relationship of the human being and the universe.

Sartre's study moves out from a central focus of human experience. To account for evolution of life and so on he would require to give an expanded investigation of the for-itself's facticity (extending out, as it were, to its history or even prehistory). This would be possible but it was not within the immediate scope of BN, which was primarily concerned with the human being - world relation, to carry out such an expanded study.

We can also find some suggestion in Sartre's works of how an expanded Sartrean study would deal with the non-human animal life-forms. Actually, we can here find some overlap between Sartre and Merleau-Ponty in that just as the latter describes the forms of life in their specificity so within the human being the former allows for different modes of consciousness and gives them a specific description. He examines pre-reflective consciousness, reflective consciousness and, as we have briefly looked at already, the neutral positing dream consciousness or the spontaneous emotional "magical" consciousness. Sartre could extend his approach of seeing the human being as a conscious organic unity and examining the specific mode of consciousness to the animal kingdom. Sartre in The Psychology of Imagination said that the dreaming consciousness gives us a hint of what a consciousness enmired in the world would be like.[175] We could perhaps think of the non-human animals as actual instances of a type of enmired consciousness. But, using Sartre's procedure of setting out from human experience, it would seem right to set off human consciousness as the for-itself. The cat, for example, appears to me as a living

unity but it could not fulfil the role that the other human being does in Sartre's story of the person feeling a shudder of shame on being confronted by another.

As we now reach the end of this chapter we have before us the skeletal framework or basic foundation, extracted from Sartre's BN, for studying human beings and their world. This foundation avoids both physicalist blinkers to the "spiritual" aspect of the human being, blinkers by which we would theoretically submerge ourselves within the in-itself thus denying the possibility of theory, and idealist blinkers to the human being's facticity as an embodied existent in a resistant world, blinkers by which we would theoretically deny ourselves the means of being conscious thus from the other side denying the possibility of theory. It is a foundation in which we study everything in terms of the relation of the conscious bodily unity which is the for-itself to the resistant world it lives in, a world, however, which is a world, a sphere of experience, only by our experiencing it. This foundation theoretically encapsulates every field of study. Even natural science must take its place within the for-itself - world relation as one project the former can engage in with respect to the latter. Armed now with this basic foundational approach we can go on to examine with Sartre the human being's actions, its hopes and desires, relations with others and so on or, generally, its life within the for-itself - world relation.

CHAPTER 2: FREEDOM AND NOTHINGNESS

2.1 THE HUMAN BEING AS A FREEDOM

Let us now briefly survey the ground we have covered so far. I have been asking the question "What is the human being?" on the premise that this needs to be explicitly investigated since a faulty conception of what the human being is would at the outset contaminate with error any study of human affairs. I have attempted to show that a view of the human being as reducible to a determined physical object is one such faulty conception. If the thinking, feeling, intending and so on of the human being are identified as being no other than determined physical processes then, I have been saying, there is a sense in which human consciousness is lost as consciousness. There are only physical things and events with no-one to experience them. There is no-one to experience a thought, for example, meaningfully as a thought. Even the determinist theory itself must be identified with physicality so that there is no-one to experience the determinist theory meaningfully as a theory. Everything is buried in a physical anonymity, a nameless mass with no-one to experience it in any way.

As against this consequence of physical determinist theory, I pointed to our experience of ourselves as living in a "realm of meaning," as being conscious as such. We experience ourselves as thinking, feeling, intending and so on as such and our knowledge of the determinist theory does not take away this meaningful experience.

In the preceding chapter, I extracted from Sartre's BN an approach to the question of what the human being is which can accept both our physical existence in the physical world and our conscious life in a realm of meaning. To Sartre, the human being or "for-itself" is a bodily existent permeated by a conscious unity. The human being is obviously in some sense a physical body related to the physical world and there is no consciousness without this but consciousness is not then identifiable with a physical organ and its purely physical processes. The level of consciousness is reached and can be accepted as such; consciousness has certain conditions of existence but it does not equal those conditions. The human being is a conscious for-itself which "lives" its body and relates to the world.

According to the Sartrean analysis we explored, the "world" is the outside realm of independent "being-in-itself" as related to by the for-itself. This realm of transcendent being is itself indifferent to this relating activity and left to itself is lost in anonymity. The for-itself, then, for Sartre, is conscious by the relating of itself to outside being. Specifically, the for-itself is a "nothingness" in relation to it. The for-itself separates itself off as not being the in-itself. The for-itself, then, for Sartre, produces the negative in all its activities and can never achieve the solidity of being that the in-itself has. That the for-itself lives its life as a negating activity is an integral aspect of being other than pure physicality lost in anonymity. It is the price of the experience of oneself as living in a realm of meaning.

We have now reached what could be described as the foundation point of Sartre's approach to the study of the human being. To answer the question of what, in a very basic sense, the human being is, Sartre replies that the human being is not simply a physical thing but is a conscious bodily for-itself living its life as an active nothingness. If I am correct in my defence of such a view, then this gives us the theoretical base for pulling away from what I described as determinist anonymity and for proceeding to study the human being in his or her realm of meaning. Here we are only at the starting point. To further develop our picture of what the human being is, we must now explore with Sartre what it means to live as a for-itself. What is the significance for the human being of this type of existence? What sort of life is a conscious life and how are we to study it? What implications are entailed for the various fields of investigation into human affairs? To try to answer these questions let me now use Sartre's model (the human being as a for-itself) and spiral forward with it to examine how it copes with the various issues of human existence.

Here the first and essential point Sartre puts forward is that to live as a for-itself is to be "free." Sartre cannot stress this point strongly enough. Indeed, he goes so far as to say that to be a for-itself is <u>to be</u> a "freedom." That is to say, being free, or not being determined by anything but negating everything in the light of his or her own interests, is precisely what being a for-itself means, so much so that we can describe the for-itself as being a freedom.

Sartre posits this identification of the human being with freedom early on in BN. He notes the human being's ability "to secrete a nothingness which isolates it" and identifies this with "freedom."[1] What he is doing, then, is to identify the for-itself's mode of existence with freedom. He goes on to state that "there is no difference between the being of man and his being-free."[2] Later on in BN, he actually explicitly defines the for-itself as an "ontological freedom."[3] For Sartre, the for-itself in its being is a freedom.

What are we to make of this view of freedom? On the face of it, Sartre's identification of the for-itself as being a freedom may seem patently objectionable. After all, we can find in our experience many instances when our freedom is blocked. In order to act we have to obey the natural laws of the material world and we are born without prior choice into certain environmental, social and other circumstances. These conditions sometimes work against us so that we fail to achieve our ends. How, then, can Sartre define the for-itself straight-off as a freedom? Faced with these facts, indeed, we might conclude that the human being is more determined than free. Sartre himself is well aware that this objection has a seeming plausibility. "Much more than he appears 'to make himself,'" Sartre concedes:

> "man seems 'to be made' by climate and the earth, race and class, language, the history of one's collectivity, heredity, the individual circumstances of his childhood, acquired habits, the great and small events of his life."[4]

However, what we have to realise here is that Sartre does not mean by freedom that we have the power at all times to achieve what we want nor that the factors of class, environment etc. have no effect on us. I hope to show that Sartre is, rather, operating with what could be described as a balanced concept of freedom which fits in with human experience. On one side of this balance, Sartre readily accepts that the human being does not have unlimited power over the world but is in fact born without choice into it with the conditions it has. On the other side, the human being is a "freedom" in the sense that he or she is not mechanistically controlled by the conditions of the world. I experience the conditions of the world, separating myself off as not being them, rather than just being affected by them. It is only through this experience that the conditions emerge as such from undifferentiation and it is only through this experience, in which the human being pursues his or her own ends, that the conditions can become a constraint or a help to us. That is, it is only in light of the ends we pursue that the conditions of the world take on the character of a constraint or a help. By exploring these points in more detail, I hope to show that Sartre's concept of the free human being is a defensible one.

For Sartre, to talk of conditions which constrain us only serves to beg the question of what the relationship of the human being with the world is and of how a constraint can appear within this relationship. Or in other words, Sartre is pointing out that the identification of pre-existing

conditions which are imposed on the human being on his or her appearance in the world does not in itself constitute an argument against freedom. It merely sets the scene for a debate on how we respond to those conditions.

In his contribution to that debate, Sartre wishes to deny straight away that our response is caused by the conditions in a deterministic fashion. What Sartre has been trying to do all along is to undertake a study of the human being which can accept our conscious experience as such, to study the human being as an experiencing centre. This intrinsically entails, for Sartre, the rejection of any form of determinism. To hold that our acts were the end result of a strict causal chain of environmental, social or any other type of conditions would be to reduce the human being to a mere product incapable of fulfilling the role of experiencing centre and hence submerged in anonymity. Or as Sartre puts it himself:

> "by identifying consciousness with a causal sequence indefinitely continued, one transmutes it into a plenitude of being and thereby causes it to return to the unlimited totality of being."[5]

There would then be no-one to experience the conditions mentioned whether as constraining, helpful or anything else; they too would be lost in undifferentiation and the very terms "freedom" and "determinism" would have no application. To hold such a position would be to deny the evidence of our own meaningful experience.

I believe that Sartre is correct here. What his position entails is that the objections we put against physical determinism in the previous chapter apply equally to any form of strict determinism whether physical, social, psychological or of any other type. The argument in the first chapter was that if the human being was simply a physical thing whose actions were strictly determined by a chain of physical causes, then everything would be lost in a physical anonymity not even known as such. There would only be a series of physical events with no-one to experience them so that they would not even be known as such. A similar consequence occurs if we suppose that the human being is determined by a strict causal chain of social or psychological or any other type of factors. If all I do or say or think is mechanically determined by a prior social or psychological cause which again had a prior cause and so on, then there would be no-one, no experiencing centre, in any meaningful sense committing the acts or having the thoughts or saying the words. They would just be a series of determined events which - just as in physical determinism - would be lost in anonymity. There would be no-one to experience the determining social or psychological factors and know them as such.

The implications of Sartre's argument, then, is that consciousness and determinism are mutually exclusive. We have seen that Sartre has already come down on the side of consciousness since he reasoned that it was better to accept the evidence of one's own experience of oneself as a

conscious centre rather than to accept a determinism which engulfed even the very statement of the theory into the undifferentiation of the in-itself. What Sartre is also now saying is that consciousness is thus at the same time identical with freedom. The human being is a conscious experiencing centre or for-itself. It negates being-in-itself by not being it, thereby positing it as the world and setting himself or herself apart as the experiencer of that world. And the for-itself accomplishes this general negation through all his or her everyday concrete actions in which he or she negates the events around himself or herself as the experiencer of those events who freely or consciously performs its own acts in relation to them. For Sartre, then, being free is what distinguishes us as being human beings.

We must again note, of course, that Sartre is not denying that external factors have any effect on us - only that they affect us in a deterministic fashion. To gain a clearer understanding of what Sartre is opposing here, let us look at two examples of theorists whose ideas, we could argue, reduce us to anonymity or "return us to the unlimited totality of being," as Sartre put it. First, then, let us consider B.F. Skinner and his behaviourist psychology.

Skinner argued that the events around us causally determine what we do in just the same way as causes operate in the physical sciences. We could in principle trace the events in an individual's life-history which

determined him or her to commit the acts he or she did. For Skinner, "it is the environment which acts upon the perceiving person, not the perceiving person who acts upon the environment."[6] Human behaviour, then, is completely determined by the environment. The individual is stimulated by the environment and emits a determined response. There is no intermediary mind or consciousness - we simply feel "certain states of our bodies associated with behaviour" which are "by-products and not to be mistaken for causes."[7]

Under this view of the human being, then, my acts have all been caused by events outside me. It could not have been any other way. The environment I came across and the events in it caused me to behave in the way I did just as much as the heating of chemicals in a test tube caused them to react in a certain way. But if this is so, it would seem that I as the person behaving have disappeared in any meaningful sense. I have no "say" in my behaviour and I am not <u>experiencing</u> the environment; it is simply causing me to commit such and such acts. There is then no-one left in this equation to meaningfully recognize the behaviour. The behaviourist has merely been caused by his or her environment to engage in behaviourist theory-expounding behaviour. It might as well be some other type of behaviour for there is no-one there experiencing the environment to recognize types of behaviour as such. Behaviourism, we could argue, has thus reduced everything, including itself, to the "unlimited totality of being."

It is this mechanistic type of view of the causes of human actions that Sartre wishes to avoid by starting from the base of the human being as an experiencing centre. But let us note again that this does not mean Sartre has to deny that the environment affects us; only that it affects us in this mechanistic fashion.

The other example is Louis Althusser and his analysis of social structure. For Althusser, people, groups and events are merely embodiments of the social structure. Thus humanism is an illusion. Through ideology, the individual believes he or she is a subject. But the truth, according to Althusser, is that he or she is only reflecting a social structure. He exclaims that:

> "It is impossible to know anything about men except on the absolute precondition that the philosophical (theoretical) myth of man is reduced to ashes."8

For Althusser, then, the structure of society determines our actions, and concepts such as Sartre's experiencing for-itself are dismissed as illusory. The trouble with this kind of view, however, is that there is no-one left to even recognize a social structure as such. There is no individual separate enough from the social structure to be said to be experiencing life under it. The individual is merely determined to reflect it. Everything is reduced once more to the "unlimited totality of being."

Against these type of theories, Sartre points out that it

is only through the human being that the conditions under which he or she lives take on the role of conditions. I am a freedom in the sense that I experience the conditions of the world, separating myself off as not being them, rather than just being affected by them. The world and its conditions are the field in which the human being operates. I act in the world around me and I choose the ends of my actions in relation to it. It is only through these freely chosen ends that the conditions can emerge from undifferentiation to take on the character of a constraint or a help to me. To Sartre, then, the coefficient of adversity in the world which can defeat our ends is not an argument against freedom, for it is only in the light of the ends chosen by a free individual that such a coefficient can appear.

As a basic illustration of his position on the freedom of the human being, Sartre takes the example of coming up against a crag.[9] If I wish to displace it, it is a hindrance to me. If, on the other hand, I wish to scale it to survey the countryside, it appears as a valuable aid either easy or difficult to climb. If I give up the ascent because it is "too difficult" we must understand that it only is so through my original aim of climbing it and to the extent to which I value this aim. If I aimed to climb the crag at any cost, it would be no obstacle to me. To another person with totally different aims, the crag may simply be a background feature. In itself the crag is neither aid nor hindrance, neither easy nor difficult. In itself it is submerged in the mute

plenitude of being. It awaits me to "illuminate" it with my ends.

Nevertheless, even if the crag has to be illuminated by human ends in order to emerge from undifferentiation, we can still point out to Sartre that there remains in this situation something independent of us which does not jump to the whim of the "free" for-itself. For instance, we cannot by fiat of our will determine the crag to be easy to climb. Sartre readily accepts that there is in the human situation this given or "in-itself" aspect, a "residue,"[10] in his terms. However, Sartre sees this as an essential part of what freedom is. A "freedom" which consisted of inventing one's own world and objects etc. at whim from thought would lose its meaning as freedom. "If conceiving is enough for realizing," says Sartre:

> "then I am plunged in a world like that of a dream in which the possible is no longer in any way distinguished from the real."[11]

There would simply be a bizarre swirl of dream-like events in which the terms "freedom" and determinism" would have no meaning. The terms only have meaning for me as a "free" experiencing centre not "determined" by the independent realm of existence outside me. "There can be a free for-itself," Sartre continues:

> "only as engaged in a resisting world. Outside of this engagement the notions of freedom, of determinism, of necessity lose all meaning."[12]

Sartre is trying to operate with a balanced concept of freedom. Being a freedom does not mean that I can achieve

whatever I wish. Even if I wish to, I cannot sprout wings and fly. There is an element of the given in the world which can sometimes stop me achieving what I want. But I am a freedom in the sense that as an experiencing centre I act towards the given with my own chosen ends in relation to which the given takes on the characteristics it has for me. This, for Sartre, is the original philosophical concept of freedom. The empirical everyday concept of freedom as the ability to achieve what one wishes would have no meaning if we were not free in the deeper philosophical sense. "[S]uccess," he maintains, "is not important to freedom."[13] To help understand this, we might consider the position of the slave. Slavery can have meaning for the slave only if he or she is in a deeper sense free with his or her own ends in relation to which he or she experiences it. The inert piece of rock, by contrast, even though I use it for my own purposes, is beyond the scope of application of the concept.

Under this balanced concept of freedom ,then, the free for-itself neither controls the given at whim nor is limited by it; rather, he or she is free in relation to the given. However, as part of the balance, this does imply, for Sartre, one limitation on the freedom of the for-itself: the very existence of the for-itself as freedom. Or, in other words, the limitation is that the for-itself does not choose whether to be free or not; we are free whether we like it or not.

In putting forward this position, Sartre is following the same line of reasoning that he took when putting forward

his argument, as we explored in the previous chapter, that consciousness as a pure entity on its own could not be possible. For Sartre, it is inconceivable how such a consciousness could have anything to be conscious of. Consciousness once it exists is an autonomous experiencing centre but it did not found its own existence. It simply finds itself with the fact of its contingent existence in the form of the conscious bodily for-itself negating the in-itself and in this way experiencing a world. The in-itself is itself a contingent existent but it has no need of the for-itself, it is beyond any need of being brought out of its undifferentiation and remains untouched in itself by the for-itself's experience of it. Asymmetrically, however, there is no for-itself without the in-itself to be a relation to. There is a "priority of the in-itself over the for-itself."[14]

Sartre is now equating the for-itself with freedom so the same considerations apply to this latter. If freedom has no meaning outside engagement with the given or resisting world then the for-itself cannot be the foundation of its own existence as freedom. The for-itself could not, as some mysterious entity on its own before relation to the given, create itself as a free existent from nothing. To use Sartre's analogy which counter-balances that of the slave who is in a deeper sense free, we must note that "one cannot escape a gaol in which one is not imprisoned."[15] If the free for-itself were to create itself, it would have to already be a freedom making a

free choice of itself as freedom. This would require a further prior freedom choosing freedom and then another again and so on to infinity. It would also mean that the free existent would have to have before itself the options of coming into existence or not, an absurd proposition. The limitation on the freedom of the for-itself, then, is that very freedom itself. The for-itself freely chooses the ends of his or her actions in relation to the given in-itself but he or she cannot choose not to do so. Translating Rousseau's doctrine of being "forced to be free"[16] to the ontological level, Sartre declares that:

> "In fact we are a freedom which chooses but we do not choose to be free. We are condemned to freedom ... thrown into freedom or, as Heidegger says, 'abandoned.'"[17]

The for-itself simply finds itself in existence, freely negating the given in-itself. In being free, then, the for-itself is subject to "facticity" and "contingency." We are "not free not to be free" and "not free not to exist."[18]

Sartre has in this way produced a philosophical concept of freedom which allows him to avoid a deterministic view of the human being without thereby lapsing into an implausible "idealist" position. That is, he rejects the notion of the human being as mechanistically controlled by the conditions of the world but neither does he propose that the human being is the sole creator of the world who can meet no obstacle there. For Sartre, a situation of complete determinism entails that everything

would be submerged in the undifferentiation of the in-itself since there would be no-one there to experience it. Equally, however, Sartre takes full cognizance of our experience of a world which resists us and how from this point of view it is inconceivable how an existent could be "free" without conditions to be free in relation to. Sartre instead recognizes that the human situation is an "ambiguous phenomenon"[19] in which the human being as an experiencing centre or free for-itself only discovers himself or herself as such in relation to the resistant world he or she acts towards and in which the world in turn only is revealed as such through the for-itself's experience of it. "[T]here is freedom only in a <u>situation</u>," says Sartre, "and there is a situation only through freedom."[20]

What does all this mean concretely for our study of the human being? In the previous chapter, we encountered Sartre's position that while the human being is in some sense a physical body related to the physical world, one consciously "lives" one's body and consciously relates to the world. Sartre has now designated this mode of existence as "freedom" and focused a little more closely on the world freedom relates to, noting that it presents us with a situation of certain environmental and social conditions. But just as the for-itself lives his or her body, so as a freedom he or she lives his or her situation. What this means for the study of the human being is that whether we are talking of race, class, language, economic structure or whatever, we are talking of a situation which has to be "brought to life" by

the human being. The human being has to experience the situation, conduct action in relation to it and thereby develop its own free response to it.

What could be seen as of benefit in this position is that rather than determinist undifferentiation or idealist inconceivability, we have a concrete phenomenon to study: that of the human being who lives a resistant situation and who as a freedom chooses the ends of his or her action by which he or she experiences the situation and makes it such. However, many questions now arise regarding Sartre's position. What significance is to be accorded to a "freedom" which is that of being an experiencing centre but in relation to a given one does not determine and to what extent does such a "freedom" counterbalance the weight of the given in the situation? And how can we study the life of a human being in terms of freedom without thereby ending up simply recording the randomly chosen acts of a gratuity? Hopefully, we will find the answers to such questions as we proceed now with Sartre as he attempts to show how the issues of human life can be adequately explored using his concept of freedom.

2.2 FREEDOM TO ACT

Let us begin by looking in more detail at how, for Sartre, the human being acts freely at any particular moment. We shall deal later on with the issue of how it would be possible to study, in any coherent fashion, the life-history of a human being with such a freedom.

We examined above Sartre's view that we experience the conditions of the world rather than that we are mechanistically controlled by them. This entails, for Sartre, that there is not anything in a given situation which can determine the human being in his or her actions. Whatever the identifiable "cause" or "motive" of my action - be it a state of the world or even a previous decision I have made - I am a for-itself separate from it and it only receives its force as a cause or motive through me. E.g. a previous decision can be the "cause" of my action only in so far as I choose to abide by that decision. This is the point Sartre is making when he says that a "nothing" always "slips in" between the for-itself and its motive.[21] For Sartre, then, human action is the expression of freedom. Sartre goes on to outline in detail how human action expresses freedom.

To act, says Sartre, is: to modify the shape of the world; arrange means in view of an end; and produce an organised instrumental complex such that an anticipated result is attained.[22] The most important aspect here, for Sartre, is that the act is intentional (in the ordinary English usage sense of purposive). I act on the world in order to bring about some desired but as yet non-existent state of affairs. According to Sartre's analysis, this entails that the for-itself has been able to withdraw itself from being to approach non-being. That is, he or she has not concerned him or herself merely with what is but has posited an as yet unachieved goal in relation to which the current situation is "lacking" or missing something and which he or she is going to attempt to realize. The situation, in Sartre's

terminology, appears as an "objective lack" or "negatite."[23] This recognition of a negatite is, for Sartre, the condition of action. It is this purposiveness which distinguishes the concept of an act from that of a mere happening.

Sartre illustrates this point with the example of a worker engaging in revolutionary action to change the oppressive conditions of his class.[24] The mere fact of the terrible conditions of his life is not sufficient to cause his revolutionary acts. Indeed, the worker may at first accept his lot, taking it as natural. If he now views his situation as intolerable and as a motive for action, this can only be because he has in a sense withdrawn from it. That is, he is no longer immersed in it as a purely positive natural state but views it in the light of a project of changing it into a situation of better conditions for all. It is in this new light that the current situation appears as intolerable and as a motive for action.

To engage in such action, according to Sartre, the worker enacts a double nihilation. He conceives of an as yet non-existent desired new state of affairs or, in Sartre's terminology, he is aware of the nothingness of the new state. He then negates the present situation, as the undesired state to be transformed into the new one. The present situation is now being viewed as a nothingness, it is the undesirable negation of the projected new situation. To conduct his action, then, says Sartre, the worker must "posit an ideal state of affairs as a pure present nothingness," and "posit

the actual situation as nothingness in relation to this state of affairs."[25]

Sartre makes the inference from this that "the indispensable and fundamental condition of all action is the freedom of the acting being."[26] If action involves positing nothingness then there is not anything outside me which can determine me to act. A positive factor can produce only another positive factor and both are in themselves lost in the undifferentiation of the in-itself. No state of the world can force us to act; only the for-itself, by freely negating being through a negatite, can act. Thus Sartre declares that:

> "no factual state whatever it may be (... political ... economic... psychological ...) is capable by itself of motivating any act whatsoever. For an act is a projection of the for-itself toward what is not and what is can in no way determine by itself what is not ... no factual state can determine consciousness to apprehend it as a negatite or as a lack ... no factual state can determine consciousness to define it and to circumscribe it since ... Spinoza's statement 'omnis determinatio est negatio,' remains profoundly true."[27]

This, however, is not to say that the act has no cause whatsoever. We have just heard that Sartre distinguishes the act as having an intention or purpose. I act because I want to change a situation I find unsatisfactory in the light of a conception of a better situation. The act, then, must refer to causes or motives, for an act without a cause would be an act lacking the intentional structure of an act, an absurdity. But the cause has no life of its own, it has no

deterministic force. The for-itself must confer on the cause its value as a cause. For example, the "cause" of the worker's act of revolt is the intolerable situation in which he lives but this situation only is such a cause through the worker's conception of a better situation. So for Sartre there is no motive/act/end separation: the three form one movement or "upsurge." This upsurge "as the pure temporalizing nihilation of the in-itself is one with freedom," Sartre tells us. "It is the act which decides its ends and its motives and the act is the expression of freedom."[28]

We must note, however, that Sartre does not mean by this that freedom necessarily involves a reflective deliberation on the part of the for-itself regarding his or her actions. In the previous chapter, we looked at Sartre's view of the for-itself as primarily non-reflective but nevertheless inherently conscious of himself or herself. The for-itself in his or her everyday activities is not consumed with reflecting on himself or herself but is conscious of the world. However, the for-itself is not <u>unconscious</u> of himself or herself. He or she is a thetic consciousness of the world and a non-thetic consciousness of himself or herself as the one to whom a world can appear. To put it in plainer language, the human being in his or her everyday activities deals concretely with things and events in the world and does not primarily reflect on himself or herself. However, the things and events of the world are meaningful to the human being and he or she has the ability to stop and reflect on

his or her activities. The for-itself is conscious of himself or herself in this non-contemplative way.

In his or her everyday activities, the for-itself in this non-contemplative way gives himself or herself the cause or motive of his or her action. Here Sartre makes use of a distinction in the French language which is not made quite so strictly in the English language, though it is possible, I believe, to understand the point he is trying to put across. Sartre distinguishes between the French words "motif" and "mobile." "Motif" refers to the objective set of circumstances or situation perceived as the rationale for a particular act and is translated as "cause" (though not in a deterministic sense) by Hazel Barnes in her rendition of BN.[29] "Mobile" refers more to the subjective attitude of the actor, and its meaning is considered by the translator as adequately conveyed by the English word "motive."[30] According to Sartre's analysis, it is through the motive one gives oneself that a situation appears as a cause for action.

To use the example of the revolutionary worker again, let us suppose that he engages in a particular action, taking part in a demonstration. His motive is the desire for the betterment of the conditions of his class. The rationale behind his act, or its "cause," is the perception that demonstrating is a means of pursuing this end. It is, then, only in the light of his end or motive that the worker sees the cause as a cause. Positing an end or motive is, for Sartre, as we have heard, the positing of a negatite by a freedom, so according to Sartre it is the for-itself by

freely giving himself or herself a motive who makes the cause of his or her act a cause.

However, in our normal everyday activities, we do not immediately reflect on our motives. I simply see an action to be carried out, a task to be performed. But the task is my task, it is meaningful to me and it only appears to me as "needing to be done" through my holding of a motive in this non-contemplative way, in which I express it immediately through my acting on a cause. Just as we said that when we are conscious of the things and events of the world we are at the same time conscious of ourselves in a non-reflective way, so when we are conscious of a cause for action we are at the same time conscious in a non-reflective way of our motive for acting. To express this point in Sartre's terminology, "cause and motive are correlative, exactly as the non-thetic self-consciousness is the ontological correlate of the thetic consciousness of the object."[31] By our actions we express our outlook, our wishes and aspirations, even if we are not reflecting on them at the time.

According to Sartre, this positing of our motives and acting in accordance with them is the profound area of freedom. That is, we are this freedom whether we act reflectively or not. We have just explored the way in which when we act spontaneously we nevertheless act in accordance with the goals we have given ourselves. When, according to Sartre, we act reflectively, i.e. on the level of the will, what we are doing is simply to decide on the reflective level the best means to attain our end. It is not possible to coldly reflect

on the world and decide what our motives will be so that they would be the result of an objective deliberation. In being conscious or "free," in living as an existent for whom the things and events of the world "mean" something, our perception of the world is already a taking up of an attitude towards it. This means that any search I carry out in the world for objective reasons to act hinge on my subjectivity as a consciousness directing itself towards ends. Or in Sartre's words, "the world gives counsel only if one questions it and one can question it only for a well determined end."[32]

One point to note, though, is that Sartre does not mean by all this that there is a prior freedom which is then given subsequent expression in either a non-reflective act or a voluntary one. The freedom is contemporaneous or immediately expressed in the act. But in the case of the voluntary act, the will is not a special power of determining our motives, it is just a reflective way of expressing them. It is limited to "making the announcement."[33]

For Sartre, the bench-mark of freedom applies even to acts we commit under conditions of extreme pressure. His ontological notion of freedom even applies, for example, to a victim in the clutches of a torturer. The latter makes his or her demands and attempts through torture to force the victim to submit to them. If the victim gives in and submits, he or she does so freely. With Sartre, the excuse that the pain was unbearable and finally forced submission cuts no ice. The victim could have held out for a second, a minute, an

hour or more, as long as life endured. He or she freely chooses the moment to give in.[34]

We will discuss later the extent of significance to be attached to such a "freedom" even in the face of a torturer, given the weight of history and the organisation of society upon us. But for the moment, we can make two points summing up the freedom Sartre attributes to the for-itself. Firstly, the for-itself is not pre-programmed to commit such and such acts in such and such situations. He or she finds his or her own motives and commits his or her own acts. He or she cannot just "be" someone who gives into torture the way a rock just "is" a rock. The for-itself "makes itself be" through its own free acts. Sartre expresses this point in his dictum that "freedom has no essence ... in it existence precedes and commands essence."[35] The second point is that this freedom is our mode of existence and is something we cannot avoid even if we wish to. Every situation, as in the example of the tortured person, demands our free reaction to it. Sartre puts this idea across succinctly when he declares that "I am condemned to be free ... no limits to my freedom can be found except freedom itself ... we are not free to cease being free."[36]

2.3 FACING FREEDOM: ANGUISH AND BAD FAITH

We have been discussing how, for Sartre, the conscious for-itself in his or her being is a freedom. If Sartre is correct, a critic might demand, then we should be able to describe how the for-itself is conscious of being free. Here Sartre introduces what could be described as a kind of

"anguish cogito." That is, he points to the feeling of anguish as a distinct conscious experience in which the for-itself comes face to face with his or her own freedom.

From his reflections on human life, Sartre points to anguish as a distinct type of experience which can only have meaning within a perspective of freedom. Sartre distinguishes between, on the one hand, fear in which I am scared of an external object or circumstances which may harm me; and, on the other hand, anguish which involves being troubled by my own self, by what I myself will do with my own freedom. Sartre takes the example of vertigo.[37] I am walking along a narrow path without a guard rail above a precipice. Vertigo, here, could take two distinct forms. It could be fear that some natural occurrence - subsidence of earth, an obstacle in my way - might cause me to fall to my death. To overcome this vertigo, I act reflectively, carefully watching each step I take. Alternatively, vertigo could take the form of anguish. Viewing the precipice, I use my eyes to play with the possibility of jumping off the path. I realize that nothing can force me to walk to safety, I could at whim jump off. However, nothing can make me up jump off either. I eventually make a decision, in this case to walk on, and I am cured of my vertigo.

Another example Sartre gives is that of a soldier at war who knows he is about to come under shell bombardment.[38] The soldier can be afraid of the danger to his safety. But he can also feel anguish at what he will do in reaction to the bombardment. Will he hold up? His future action cannot be

determined to be resolute. It will be up to him whether he acts cowardly or resolutely. It is this freedom that troubles him.

To take one last example, Sartre describes the case of a gambler trying to give up his habit.[39] This is perhaps the most illustrative example and the easiest to identify with. The gambler yesterday made a resolution not to gamble any more. It is as if he has drawn a "magic circle"[40] stretching out to the future, claiming it for non-gambling. But today at this moment, he faces the gaming table. The past resolution has been made but it cannot deterministically cause him to keep it. The gambler must again give value to his reasons for stopping: the danger of financial ruin, the misery of his family etc. He is troubled because it is entirely up to him whether he will keep his resolution or not. Only he can decide; his past resolution cannot bind him.

I spoke above of Sartre introducing what I called a sort of "anguish cogito." Descartes' cogito gave him the personal assurance of the existence of his own mind but it has always been a matter of debate whether this is a "proof" of anything. For his part, Sartre does not claim that his description of anguish is a "proof" of freedom in the sense of an external hypothesis about an external object.[41] Sartre has been reflecting on human experience. In the course of this, he has encountered human activities (questioning, action etc.) which involve positing nothingness (lack of knowledge, unachieved goals etc.) He identifies this power

of negation with freedom and has now described anguish as the consciousness of freedom. Sartre accepts that this still theoretically leaves it open to us to put forward determinist views. For example, we could object that anguish in actuality is ignorance of the underlying psychological determinism.[42] But Sartre attacks this objection from his base of reflecting on human experience. His "anguish cogito" attempts to show that determinism cannot get beyond the level of hypothesis so that we remain with our consciousness of freedom.

The idea of anguish as concealing an underlying determinism, says Sartre, could mean either of two things. Firstly, it could mean that the anguished person suffers from an unrealized ignorance this determinism.[43] In that case, concentrating on anguish itself, anguish would still apprehend itself as freedom. That is, if I did not know that I was determined then I would remain anguished at myself about what I was going to do. At a deeper level, of course, in the Sartrean framework if one were determined then one would be lost in undifferentiation and the anguish could not appear as such.

The second possibility is that anguish is "consciousness of being ignorant of the real causes of our acts."[44] But in such a case anguish would lose its distinctiveness as anguish. I would appear to myself as a thing in the world and I would be afraid of what might occur with it. Again, at a deeper level, in the Sartrean framework such a determined being would not even be capable of a consciousness of fear.

The point is that we have this experience of ourselves as anguished freedom and that even if we try to formulate a determinist theory telling us we are not free, we still continue to experience anguish. Determinism, says Sartre, "avails nothing against the evidence of freedom," it is a "faith to take refuge in."[45] Faced with a theory of determinism denying our freedom and submerging us in the undifferentiated in-itself while we at the same time continue to experience ourselves as conscious and outwith an undifferentiated determinism, Sartre opts for continuing with his study of the human being as a freedom.

However, if the conscious human being in its being is a freedom, our critic might next ask why we are not permanently in an anguished condition. If the human being is a conscious freedom and anguish is a consciousness of freedom, then we should be continually anguished.[46] Here we return to Sartre's view of the for-itself as primarily engaged in a non-thetically self-conscious way in its everyday concrete activities. Here we do not ponder on the possibilities of action but put them into operation in action immediately. E.g. I jump out of bed in the morning at the sound of the alarm clock, not stopping to consider the possibility of refusal.[47] Or to take another example, I am in the middle of writing a book and not at this moment considering the worth of the enterprise.[48]

In these everyday activities, we also encounter values which we may submit to without paying explicit attention to them. Sartre takes the example of "[t]he bourgeois who call

themselves 'respectable citizens.'"[49] Born into a bourgeois environment, they act according to a respectable pattern of behaviour without having first contemplated moral values. Our everyday activities involve us in acceding to values without reflectively examining them. "Values," says Sartre, "are thrown on my path as thousands of little real demands, like the signs which order us to keep off the grass."[50]

However, it is nevertheless the human being as a (non-thetically) self-conscious freedom or for-itself who is responsible for his or her actions and who gives values their force. It is also possible for us - just as in the case of the revolutionary worker - to step back from our activities. Moving to the reflective plane, I look explicitly at my responsibility. Then:

> "I discover myself suddenly as the one who gives its meaning to the alarm clock ... who by a sign-board forbids himself to walk ... on the lawn, the one from whom the boss's order borrows its urgency, the one who decides the interest of the book he is writing, the one finally who makes the values exist in order to determine his action by their demands."[51]

The activity that "needs to be done" or the value that "must be respected" only acquires its force through me. I could stop and question my desire to write and I could refuse to accede to a particular value. "Value," says Sartre, "derives its being from its exigency and not its exigency from its being."[52] That is, value receives its force as value from my treating it as value. "My freedom," Sartre declares:

> "is the unique foundation of values and...<u>nothing</u>, absolutely nothing justifies me in adopting this or that particular scale of values. As a being

> by whom value exists, I am unjustifiable."[53]

The for-itself freely acts and posits value, and anguish is a reflective apprehension of this freedom.

Sartre contrasts the feeling of anguish with the "serious mood"[54] (or "the spirit of seriousness"[55] as he later terms it) in which one attempts to hide from the anguish of freedom. As a freedom, I am not determined to undertake the activities I engage in nor to accede to the values I encounter. However, this entails that I cannot set myself in concrete as having a solid being. As we looked at in the previous chapter, the for-itself cannot be solidly identified with any of its activities. This is the "unjustifiability" we talked of above. My present activities, style of life, character, values etc. can always be brought into question by my freedom. In the serious attitude, I treat my values as if they had a solid being of their own and as if it was of necessity that I follow them rather than from contingent free choice. For Sartre, this is an example of a phenomenon he calls "bad faith"[56] where I try to hide my anguished freedom from myself while at the same time being conscious that I am free and that I am trying to hide it. Bad faith is another human experience Sartre points to in which, like in anguish, we face our freedom - even though in this case in the course of an attempt not to face it.

Sartre distinguishes bad faith from the lie in that the former is an attempt to lie to oneself. In the normal lie, to another person, I make use of the fact that I am a separate consciousness from the other so that he or she

cannot enter into my consciousness with its deceitful intentions but only hears my words. In bad faith, however, I am attempting to hide something from myself so that there is no duality of deceiver and deceived to help me. I know the truth which I am trying to hide, I am thinking of something in order not to think of it. I achieve this by a sort of volatile "doublethink" which Sartre describes as "a certain art of forming contradictory concepts which unite in themselves both an idea and the negation of that idea."[57] This is a precarious condition I have to maintain myself in, even though it is possible to live this way for a long time. In Sartre's terminology, it is "metastable."[58]

Sartre takes the example of a woman who has gone out with a particular man for the first time.[59] She is enjoying the charm of the occasion but does not want to make any hasty decision in response to the advances of her suitor. She treats his remarks as respectful, attempting to be unaware of the sexual development of the situation. Then he takes her hand. Facing up to the advance would mean making a decision: to either take her hand away and thus break the charm of the occasion or leave it there and consent to flirtation. Rather than make the decision, she "<u>does not notice</u>" her hand.[60] She pretends to herself that it is not there.

For Sartre, as we heard in the previous chapter, the for-itself "is what it is not and is not what it is." As a for-itself conscious through negation, I can never be in a relation of solid identity with anything, not even my self. I am my self but also not my self. I cannot solidly be my

self since this would return me to the in-itself. I both am and am not it. I am it in the mode of not being it and I am not it in the mode of being it. Whether we are talking of the activity I am engaged in at the moment, my present consciousness of this, my past or future, my body, I am in a relation of negation with it. To concentrate on one of these examples, my body is me but at the same time, as a conscious for-itself, I am not solidly a body. In my actions, I transcend it towards my goals.

In the doublespeak of bad faith, the for-itself distorts the idea of being what I am not and not being what I am, holding contradictory beliefs at the same time to suit himself or herself. The woman in Sartre's example distorts the fact that she is both a facticity and a transcendence. She is her body, that facticity is her. However, she is not it in that, as a transcendence or for-itself that surpasses the given towards ends, she is not her body. She is her body in the mode of not being it. In her bad faith, however, the woman thinks of herself as not being her body in any way at all. She does not notice her hand, pretending to herself that she is in no way a body but is solidly a transcendence. She imbues her transcendence with facticity, pretending that she is a transcendence in the mode of being of a thing.

Another example Sartre gives is that of a waiter who ceremoniously performs his duties, striving to be the perfect waiter.[61] He tries to see himself as having a ready justification for his life in being the essence of a waiter, rather than freely and contingently taking up this

occupation. This is to be in bad faith. The human being, as a negating for-itself or transcendence, cannot solidly be a waiter or, for that matter, a tailor or a soldier or any other occupation. The waiter can only be a waiter in the mode of not being one. He is not determined to undertake the waiting activities and it is he who gives the work its value. But this waiter attempts to use his transcendence or negating power of surpassing towards goals to solidly be the perfect waiter, to be a waiter in the mode of the in-itself. This cannot succeed for it would be to cease being a transcendence and hence not to be able any longer even to form the project of taking up an appointment as waiter. He can only "play" at "being a waiter."[62] The facticity of his situation entails that we can say that in a sense he is a waiter - that is his occupation, he is not a diplomat or a reporter. But as a conscious for-itself, he cannot find refuge in it, he is beyond it.

Bad faith is something we can fall into in the course of any of our enterprises. We are in bad faith when we try to make excuses to ourselves for our own actions. For example, everyday phrases such as "I can't help it, that's the way I am" are in bad faith. We are conscious that our actions are ours and we do not want to lose this meaningfulness but, at the same time, we try to pretend to ourselves that they can be given a solid justification as the effect of our "character" or situation or whatever. We are consciously deluding ourselves and this self-delusion can always collapse in anguish. The for-itself, for Sartre, is unavoidably free.

Sartre's concepts of anguish and bad faith do appear to highlight important aspects of human experience which are of relevance to the question of whether or not the human being is "free." His descriptions of how we can feel troubled in the face of responsibility for decisions we have to make and of how we sometimes attempt to "kid ourselves on" about aspects of our life would, I believe, be readily recognized by most human beings. Sartre would also seem to be quite correct in pointing out that these aspects of experience only have meaning within a perspective of freedom. Anguish and bad faith are types of experience we, as human beings living in what I termed earlier as a "realm of meaning," have. Any theory of complete determinism of the human being, whether by physical, social, psychological or any other type of factors, is over-ruling one side of the evidence.

We looked earlier at how Sartre, with his balanced approach, quite readily accepts that the conditions of the world present the human being with a side of his or her situation which he or she did not create and which can interfere in the pursuit of his or her goals. Sartre has also pointed to the human experiences of acting in pursuit of goals, feeling troubled about what to do and trying to evade that feeling. In doing so, Sartre does seem at least to show that there is as much justification for trying to formulate a theory of what the human being is which does not view him or her as mechanistically determined by a series of causes but, instead, sees the human being as an experiencing agent <u>interacting</u> with the "causes." This type of view also has the added advantage over determinism that it can "fit in"

with our experience rather than branding it as illusory and having to find some device to explain it away.

Again, however, a point of discussion must be how significant the area of freedom is that Sartre attributes to us, given the weight of history and society upon us. This is particularly relevant when talking, as Sartre has, of "values" which society throws on our path in various situations. This is an issue we will discuss in more detail later in this chapter.

2.4 FREEDOM AND TIME

We have been talking of the for-itself as a freedom which to act must surpass the given towards a future end. We also saw earlier that Sartre describes the act as the "temporalizing nihilation of the in-itself."[63] Sartre is, then, linking the freedom of the human being with his or her temporality. Indeed, it is clear from a reading of BN that Sartre sees temporality as an integral aspect of how the for-itself operates. A look at Sartre's view of temporality, then, will shed some further light on some of the points made in the preceding chapter. It is also very much in relation to time, for Sartre, that the for-itself is free. It will be useful, therefore, to study this area of Sartre's scheme before we move on to consider some of the broader issues concerning the subject of freedom.

Sartre makes five main points regarding temporality. Firstly, outside the human being there is only the undifferentiation of being-in-itself where there can be no

"time" as such. Secondly, time appears through the for-itself with the latter's leaving behind a past and projecting a future. The for-itself is responsible for time. To take the third point, time seen as an outside temporality of the world is a projection of the for-itself's own temporality. The fourth point is that the for-itself, being responsible for time, is free in relation to it; we can be determined neither by our past nor by a planned future. Finally, the fifth point is that since the for-itself is in its being a free temporal existent, it cannot fully step outside of itself to view itself as an external object. It can only truly get a reflective grip on itself in a "pure" reflection which overflows itself and has no proper vantage point. Let us now look at how Sartre develops this view of time, beginning with the first point.

A common way of thinking of time is to picture it as a kind of temporal plane running in a straight line from the Past, through the Present, and on to the Future. This plane is an independently existing environment which possesses its temporal form in its own right and in which we happen to be placed. This easily gives rise to the science fiction fantasy of travelling in a time machine to the various points on the line. Sartre cannot accept such a conception of time. Independently of the human being, there exists only the undifferentiated being-in-itself where no distinguishing features such as division into Past, Present and Future can arise.

Sartre believes that the inadequacy of such a "realist" view of time, if I may call it that, can be demonstrated if we try to focus on the separate points on the line. Let us first attempt to focus on the Present. If we try to home in on a pure present instant, we find that it is an impossible task; the moment we try to pin down an instant, it slips away from us. Thus, in measuring time, it is impossible to reach an indivisible unit of time; the second can be split up into hundredths of a second, these into millionths of a second and these into further divisions ad infinitum. By dividing time in the search for a pure present instant, we end up with an infinite division whose limit would in fact be nothing.[64] This means, for Sartre, that it is not good enough to point to "the Present" as if to an independent dot on a line. Independently of the human being, there is only being-in-itself which has no present as such. We have to investigate how the human being can distinguish his or her present, giving himself or herself a present as such.

We also run into difficulties if we try to focus on the Past. If time is an independent line, then the present point on which we are placed does not of itself refer to any other. It would not of itself refer to a past. Outside of the human being, there is only being-in-itself which does not set out a past. It is no use here, according to Sartre, resorting to the device of viewing the Past as a residue in the Present. This would dissolve it in the Present, robbing it of its distinctiveness as past.[65] Alternatively allowing that the Past has being but being that it is "in retirement" is no solution either. This takes us away from the independent

line to the for-itself referring to the past or "retired" time, making it appear as such.[66] Outside the for-itself there is only the undifferentiated being-in-itself which is beyond reference to particular features such as a retired time.

There are similar problems in conceiving of the Future. If time is an independent line, then the present point on which we are placed does not of itself refer to a future. E.g. the crescent moon does not of itself conceive of its future completion in a full moon.[67] By itself it is submerged in the undifferentiation of the in-itself. A future state of the moon again refers to the human being directing himself or herself to the future, allowing a future to appear as such.

The point Sartre is trying to put across here is that any view of time which treats it as a ready-formed independent field fails to provide us with the theoretical base from which to move in any temporal direction. Sartre instead, moving on to the second point, sees time as the product of the for-itself's relating to the world. For Sartre, as we have seen, the for-itself is conscious of itself as not being the in-itself and this negation takes the form of the for-itself's concrete activities in the world. We have also heard from Sartre that these activities involve the for-itself surpassing the given towards a future goal. According to Sartre, this means that the for-itself's negation of the in-itself is already a temporal one. In conducting its activities, the for-itself sees a present state of affairs as to be made past and to be replaced by an alternative state in

the future. Time appears through the negating activity of the for-itself.

Sartre has said that the for-itself is a nothingness of the in-itself. Another way he puts it is that the for-itself is a "presence to being-in-in-itself."[68] Sartre is here using the word "presence" somewhat in the sense of a verb. Being-in-itself in anonymity simply <u>is</u> but the for-itself, in negating the in-itself, makes itself present to (itself as not being) the in-itself. In so doing, the for-itself surpasses the in-itself. For Sartre, this is the original moment of "making-past," the original case of leaving something behind as a past.[69] Through my negating the in-itself, this latter becomes what I have passed from in order to be conscious of myself. The undifferentiation of the in-itself which held sway before I arose as a conscious for-itself (and in which that initial unconscious foetus that was me was engulfed)[70] is my past. According to Sartre's ontological proof, this making-past of the in-itself is the only way the for-itself can be a consciousness. On this view, then, the for-itself comes into the world already with a past.[71] As a negation or surpassing of the in-itself, the for-itself can never appear, even at its very first arising, without a past.

What Sartre is trying to establish here is that the for-itself is responsible for there being a present and a past. The for-itself makes itself present to itself as not being the in-itself and thereby leaves behind the undifferentiated in-itself as its past. We have already said that this

negation takes the form of our everyday activities. This entails that surpassing the in-itself is a continual making-past I carry out. In the context of our everyday activities this means two things. Firstly, I leave behind an object-past which is mine.[72] In presently carrying out an action to change the state of affairs, I make my previous condition past. My past, then, is not just the in-itself in general but also my previous concrete surpassings of it. My past is the actions I carried out five minutes ago, a week ago, a year ago etc. Secondly, I continually carry this past along behind me. My present action always involves a reference to the past in some way without any need to explicitly reflect on it. My present action involves sustaining a project begun in the past, moving forward from a past position etc.[73]

The for-itself also simultaneously directs itself to the future, again without any need to explicitly posit it. Sartre illustrates this with the example of the tennis player.[74] The player immediately takes up his or her present position on the court with reference to the future. The player runs toward the net or retreats a little in expectation of where the ball will go and in a project of returning the ball over the net. We could add, of course, from what has already been said about the past, that the player's present position also involves his or her previous positions on the court. The tennis player, then, like the for-itself in general, directs himself or herself towards the past, the present and the future all at once. Time, for Sartre, comes into the world through this directing activity.

By making itself present to a given which it surpasses towards a future, the for-itself makes itself temporal.

However, according to Sartre, this projecting of the for-itself in three temporal dimensions causes division in the being of the for-itself. It leaves behind itself a past and ahead of itself a future with which it has a problematical relationship. I freely carry out my activities but on completion they solidify behind me. That is, my past activities were freely undertaken when I was in the process of carrying them out but, now that they are past, they are in-itself events.[75] I can no longer enter into them in their dynamic as they occur. Similarly, that future me I project who will have achieved some goal (e.g. he will have finished his thesis) has not yet arrived. It is not yet me, it is an ideal.[76]

But, for Sartre, this division cannot be complete. If it were complete, the past and future would no longer be directed to and would be lost in anonymity with no-one to be the past or future of. In fact, the divided parts are reintegrated under a wider unity. I was that boy who went to primary school, that past is me. That person who will have finished his thesis is will be me, I am that future. In a unity encompassing division, the for-itself must simultaneously be the Past, the Present and the Future. This is the "diasporatic form of Temporality."[77] Just as the ancient Jews were dispersed across different lands yet remained a unified people, so the for-itself exists as one, even though dispersed across the three temporal dimensions.

According to Sartre, it is only the for-itself which can exist in this diasporatic mode. Outside the human being, there is only the solidity of being-in-itself and no differentiation of various dimensions within a temporal unity could arise. For Sartre, then, temporality is the responsibility of the human being; it only appears through the directing activity of the for-itself.

The third main point Sartre puts forward is that when in our everyday activities we operate with a view of time as an independent external temporality, we are only receiving back a reflection of our own temporal directing. Earlier, we heard how, for Sartre, the for-itself's consciousness of something as being a reason for an action reflects its positing of an end in the light of which the action appears as a means towards it. Similarly, according to Sartre, the for-itself in its non-reflective everyday activities sees time as outside on being, but this is only a projection of the for-itself's own temporal directing.

Sartre labels time as seen from the unreflective perspective "universal time"[78] or "external temporality."[79] From this perspective, objects such as my pen, for example, appear as themselves temporal. The pen was here a moment earlier and will still be here a moment later, it has its own past and future. From this perspective too, time appears as a general independent temporal field in which the present moment by itself slips into the past and gives way to a future moment so that this universal "Time" encompasses a series of

objective or "in-itself" past moments and an abstract future in which "something will happen."

However, this temporality, according to Sartre, is only a projection of the for-itself's own temporal activity of leaving behind a past and positing a future. The past moment is a previous presence of myself to the world that I have surpassed towards new goals, and the generalized future of universal time is an abstraction from the fact that I have a future. The future world is a future world I will be present to. The pen receives its temporality from me as the pen I was present to in the past and will be present to in the future. The pen itself is completely exterior to this temporality, it is beyond concern with it. Something comes from the in-itself in that the appearance and disappearance of objects before me - "apparitions" and "abolitions" in Sartre's terminology[80] - is not something I can control at will or invent. But only with the for-itself are these plucked from the undifferentiation of the in-itself to be viewed temporally. External time in the Sartrean scheme, then, is a reflection of the for-itself's own temporal existence. Time comes into the world through the human being.

Sartre's fourth main point is that the for-itself, being responsible for time, is free in relation to it so that we cannot be determined by our past nor by a planned future. Earlier, we heard Sartre say that the for-itself, in a unity encompassing division, is the Past, the Present and the Future all at once. According to Sartre, this is only

possible because the for-itself is a nothingness and it is through this negative being that the for-itself is free in relation to time.

Sartre, as we noted in the previous chapter, distinguishes between the undifferentiated being-in-itself which simply is what it is and the for-itself which, by contrast, as the negation of whatever it is conscious of, can never be solidly identified with anything. This has consequences for the way the for-itself is its past and future.

The for-itself, we heard Sartre say, freely carries out its own activities but on completion they solidify behind it as an object-past whose content it cannot change. For example, my actions at school in 1976 are an objective and unalterable set of events which did happen. In this sense, the past is an "in-itself," a thing which simply is, and of itself it would be lost in the undifferentiation of being-in-itself. The past is only brought out of this undifferentiation by the for-itself relating to it. The past is the past <u>of</u> someone. The for-itself is its past. E.g. I was that schoolboy of 1976, that past is me. The "was," according to Sartre, indicates the relation by which the for-itself makes itself be its past.[81]

However, we cannot rest there. For Sartre, the for-itself is a nothingness, it cannot be solidly identified with anything. This entails that the for-itself is in a relation of being and <u>non-being</u> with its past. The for-itself makes the past its past but it negates it at the very same time. The for-

itself is its past in the mode of not being it. It is not the past which it is. The schoolboy of 1976 is me but, at the same time, I negate this past, it cannot determine any of my actions; I must confer on it the meaning it has for me, whether I am proud of it or embarrassed by it, and decide how I will react to it. The for-itself is free in relation to its past.

Similarly, the for-itself is in a relation of being and non-being with its future. The for-itself gives itself a future by projecting towards a desired but as yet non-existent new state of affairs. It sees itself as at present lacking something it desires. It projects achieving its goal so that it will be in the future that fulfilled self which it is not yet. This future, then, is an ideal, something the for-itself does not yet coincide with. However, only the for-itself can posit a future - a perceived negation of the present - as such. It is the for-itself who projects this future, making it its future. The for-itself, then, is the future which it is not. The for-itself, being responsible in this way for its future, remains free in relation to it. It is an ideal I myself project and nothing can force me to continue to carry on with my project of it. Even when I have reached my projected future, I still cannot coincide with it or solidly be it. I freely have to relate to and cope with my new condition.

The for-itself is a nothingness and has projected being its future. But even when it reaches its goal it cannot find full satisfaction. E.g. I project gaining a degree, to

become the very model of a knowledgeable person. However, on graduating, I do not feel vastly different. I find myself unable to rest at this point. I have my degree but there are still gaps in my knowledge and I have to work at new projects. This is the experience of what Sartre calls "ontological disillusion."[82] I reach my goal and say "is it only this?" I can never solidly be the future I project.

The present nothingness which is the for-itself, then, has to be and not be its past and future. Sartre sums this up when he says that the for-itself as temporal "can and must ... (1) ... not-be what it is, (2) ... be what it is not" and "(3) be what it is not and ... not-be what it is - within the unity of a perpetual referring."[83] I cannot solidly be my past or future but must remain a present freedom in relation to them.

Sartre's qualifying phrase, within the unity...," is important here. If the for-itself is always a present freedom in relation to its past and future, then it could be seen as shattered into multiple separate temporal selves. The present for-itself becomes past and a new present for-itself, free from the old one, takes its place. The new present for-itself becomes past in its turn and gives way to another new free present for-itself and so it goes on. However, Sartre's qualification entails that temporality in this way gives rise only to a "quasi-multiplicity."[84] It is not a matter of a completely new existent springing up in place of an old one. Rather, it is the for-itself, as one unified existent, which multiplies itself. The for-itself is

responsible for its activities. It is also responsible for seeing those activities as not yet fully satisfying and for surpassing them towards other activities, thus leaving them behind as its solidified "in-itself" past. Sartre tries to express what he means here by means of a pictorial description. We must visualize the for-itself as a moving hole travelling through being. As it moves forward, being solidifies behind it again. At its new place, it remains still a hole in being. "Everything happens," Sartre tells us:

> "as if the Present were a perpetual hole in being - immediately filled up and perpetually reborn - as if the Present were a perpetual flight away from the snare of the in-itself which threatens it until that final victory of the in-itself...death ..."[85]

At death, according to Sartre, the whole life of the for-itself becomes an in-itself past. That is, the for-itself's whole life is now past and the for-itself is no longer there to relate to this past, to actively make it its own past. Only an outside witness can now preserve the dead one's past. This means, says Sartre, that at death one is reduced to a "for-others."[86] At my death, the only perspective from which my life will be able to be looked at is that of other people. But that will be <u>their</u> concern alone. As long as my life endures, I must continue to exist as a free temporal moving "hole in being."

The image of a hole in being perpetually filled up and perpetually re-born fits very well the continual freedom Sartre attributes to the for-itself in relation to time. As

I move forward to new activities, a new present, I leave behind my former present as a past. This former present had its own projected future. That is, I was at that time pursuing a particular goal. If I have now achieved that goal and thus reached the projected future, I still, as we said earlier, cannot be solidly identified with it. If I have not yet achieved it, then - like the gambler who has to decide whether or not to fulfil his vow never again to gamble - only I can decide whether or not that project will be continued. E.g. that boy I was in 1976 had a certain ambition. That projected future has no force of its own. If I now reject it, it is behind me as a former future which is no longer my project. If I still strive for that future, then it is me, by presently continuing to pursue it, who gives it its force. In the field of temporality too, according to Sartre, we are "condemned to be free."[87]

Earlier, we looked at Sartre's view of the for-itself as primarily conscious of itself in a non-thetic way but capable secondarily of reflecting on itself. However, Sartre's argument that the for-itself is responsible for temporality and is free in relation to it entails that such reflection is only possible in a limited sense. This brings us to our fifth and final point on temporality.

For Sartre, as we have seen, the for-itself only perceives time through its being a continual present surpassing of the for-itself towards a future. On this view, then, to be a for-itself is precisely to be the kind of existent which is continuously engaged in such an activity of surpassing.

Consequently, the for-itself cannot, as it were, "step outside" of its own surpassing to achieve a reflective view of itself completely as an external object. The for-itself is a consciousness or point of view on the world and it cannot step outside of this viewpoint to see itself the way it sees other people or objects outside itself. The for-itself can only view itself from its own viewpoint.

The for-itself, therefore, according to Sartre, can only genuinely achieve a reflection which is a diffused immediate knowledge of itself as a free for-itself. Sartre denotes this as "pure reflection."[88] Pure reflection is directed to "original temporality."[89] That is, it is a reflective awareness of oneself in one's actual living as a for-itself freely conducting its activities, going beyond the past and projecting a future. Sartre denotes the attempt to achieve more than this as "impure reflection"[90] which is directed to "psychic temporality."[91] That is, impure reflection occurs when one attempts to reach a really external view of oneself, leading instead to a distorted picture of oneself as a solid "psyche"[92] whose actions, character and so on can be seen to have solid past causes. Let us now look in a little more detail at how Sartre reaches this view of temporality and reflection.

Reflection on oneself, for Sartre, is an explicitly posited form of the consciousness of self that one already is. As we saw earlier, the unreflective for-itself is already a (non-thetic) consciousness of self. Sartre even described it as a "reflection-reflecting." This is not in the sense of mental

or introspective reflection (which in French is denoted by the word "reflexion") but, again as we saw earlier, in the sense of the reflection of an image as in a game of mirrors (denoted by the separate French word "reflet").[93] This "reflection" entails that the for-itself is a non-thetic consciousness of itself simultaneously with its consciousness of the world. Reflection in the sense of "reflexion," for Sartre, is an explicitly posited form of this consciousness of self.

Sartre has talked throughout of the for-itself as a nothingness which cannot be tied down to a solid identity. By explicit reflection, according to Sartre's interpretation, the for-itself attempts to step outside itself to view itself from an outside perspective and thus at last get a firm grip on its being. To accomplish such a feat, Sartre argues, the for-itself carrying out the reflection (the reflective for-itself) must both be and not be its own self upon which it is reflecting (the reflected-on). The reflective for-itself must be one and the same as the reflected on for-itself otherwise it would not be a case of reflection but of one for-itself viewing a completely independent other for-itself. Reflection is a self-modification of the one for-itself, it is an "interiorization."[94] But the reflective for-itself must also not be the reflected-on. Consciousness, Sartre has stated, is conscious of something by negating it as the object consciousness is not. If, then, the reflective for-itself is to be an external view of the reflected-on, the former must negate the latter as the object it is not or, in Sartre's terminology, be an "objectivation" of it.[95]

According to Sartre, however, the goal of reflection cannot be fully attained. The problem is that the for-itself cannot completely achieve an objectivation of itself. The for-itself is a centre of conscious experience, a viewpoint on the world. Even when it reflects on itself it has to do so as a centre of experience from its own viewpoint. A viewpoint reflecting on itself cannot thereby escape that viewpoint. The for-itself remains a nothingness unable to attain a solid being. I cannot fully step outside myself to view myself the way I view an external object. I cannot complete an affirmation/negation of myself as an object.

Reflection, for Sartre, <u>is</u> this failure to achieve full objectivation. That is, reflection for the human being is precisely that kind of view of oneself that one achieves but which somehow does not quite make the mark. In reflection, I get a view of myself but not a truly external one. The for-itself even in reflection cannot step outside the centre of experience which it is. An outside view of myself can only be achieved by someone else. One can (and indeed can only) view someone else from a perspective external to that person but one cannot do the same for oneself.

This entails, for Sartre, that the only genuine reflection one can reach is pure reflection. Here the for-itself knows itself as free and observes itself in its original temporality as a continuing free pursuer of goals. But because one cannot observe oneself from a truly external perspective, one is only reflecting on a "quasi-object."[96]

Pure reflection is a diffused knowledge of oneself all at once without a vantage point. It is an explicitly posited form of what one is already: a consciousness of self. Pure reflection, then, is a revelation of the already revealed, a knowledge that does not surprise me. It is a self-knowledge over-flowing itself.

In impure reflection, however, the for-itself attempts to push the reflective project finally towards the goal of an external objective view of itself. Sartre, as we saw earlier, has stated that my activities, on being finished and left in the past, become in-itself events, although they had to be actively pursued by me at the time. In impure reflection, the for-itself, in the attempt to get a fully external view of itself, treats itself as if it were an in-itself in its entirety. The for-itself, in consequence, directs itself to a false projected psychic temporality. That is, the for-itself reflects on itself with a distorted view projecting itself to be a consciousness in a degraded, solidified way, to be a ready-made "psyche"[97] rather than an active free temporally directing for-itself.

Here, one regards oneself in a very object-like way. One looks at one's activities as if they were determined by independently effective causes and as if one's character was a ready-made mixture of given aspects. For example, I reflect on my state of anger the other night which was <u>caused</u> by the annoying remarks of another person. Or, I reflect on my personality as comprising of various traits (cheerfulness, insecurity, ambition etc.) as if these were solid qualities I

as an object have. This stultified picture of myself does not match what the actual experience is like of actively living my life, choosing how to act and developing my personality. Pure reflection, in contrast, operates within the recognition of this experience.

Impure reflection, according to Sartre, is in bad faith.[98] The for-itself deems itself to be getting an external perspective on itself as a solid psyche but this latter is a projected object which the for-itself is not. Impure reflection, says Sartre, is the first moment of reflection but pure reflection is the original form.[99] That is, impure reflection would not be possible unless it was a pure reflection pushed further into impurity. My distorted projection of myself into a solid object to be observed from the outside presupposes an original reflective knowledge of myself at its base. It is by an effort of katharsis, Sartre declares, that one can return to this original pure reflection.[100]

This division of reflection into "pure" and "impure" seems puzzling. Most human beings reflect on their lives from time to time and see this scrutiny as valuable. However, Sartre states that the only genuine reflection, pure reflection, is a diffuse awareness of oneself as a free consciousness. Such an awareness would not seem to be detailed enough to allow for that type of self scrutiny we value. Yet it would seem, furthermore, that such scrutiny, under Sartre's view, would fall into the realm of impure reflection and would be in bad

faith. Is Sartre, then, condemning and devaluing a normal and useful human capacity?

I do not believe that this is Sartre's intention. Sartre does seem to accurately pinpoint an integral aspect of the human being's experience of trying to reflect on himself or herself when he states that we can never get a truly external picture of ourselves. Indeed, we could say that he is expressing in a philosophical way what Rabbie Burns expressed in poetic form when he wished that "God could gie us the gift tae see ourselves as others see us." It is this inability to get an external grip on ourselves that leads to the feeling of ontological disillusion when we have reached our goal but do not feel totally satisfied. To go back to the phrase I used in the preceding chapter, we are "switched on." Any attempt I, in the process of being conscious, make to reflect on myself is itself part of that process and so cannot get outside of it to give me a truly external view of myself.

"Pure reflection" is when I make myself explicitly aware of my "switched-onness." However, even if we cannot get a truly external view of ourselves, we do need, in our everyday lives, to look at past events, things we have done and to make decisions on this basis. Sartre does recognize this. He describes the object of impure reflection as a "virtual presence" and as my "shadow" revealed to me when I wish to see myself. But he also states that:

> "In addition this phantom world exists as a *real situation* of the for-itself, for it can be that in terms of which the for-itself determines itself to be what it has to be. For example, I shall not go

> to this or that person's house 'because of' the antipathy I feel toward him. Or I decide on this or that action by taking into consideration my hate or my love. Or I refuse to discuss politics because I know my quick temper and I cannot risk becoming irritated."[101]

It would seem, then, that Sartre allows for the kind of self-scrutiny I have been talking about but sees pure reflection as making us realize that we are ourselves responsible for any characteristics we discover in ourselves through such scrutiny. This is particularly important given that Sartre later on advocates an "existential psychoanalysis" in which one must objectively probe one's own life but with the goal of discovering and recognizing a free "original project," one's own mode of living centred round a deep personal concern. We will discuss this issue in more detail in the next section of this chapter.

2.5 THE LIFE OF A FREE FOR-ITSELF

What I have done so far in this chapter is to give an outline of what Sartre's view of the human being as a freedom basically entails, namely that the human being is an existent whose acts can never be determined by given causes since it forms its own ends for action. Now we can proceed to tackle the two broader issues I raised earlier. Firstly, what significance is to be accorded to the type of freedom Sartre attributes to us; to what extent can such a freedom be said to counterbalance the weight of the given in our situation? Secondly, how can we study the life of the human being on the basis of Sartre's view of freedom without thereby ending up simply recording a series of randomly chosen acts? In

relation to this latter question, Sartre insists that it is possible to study the coherent "personality" and "life story" of an individual human being while maintaining the perspective of freedom. By studying first how Sartre sees the life of a free for-itself unfold, I hope to be in a better position to deal with the former question regarding the significance of freedom.

(A) BALANCE

I have throughout been stressing that Sartre proceeds from the basis of reflection on meaningful human experience and that this leads him to his view of the human being as free. However, it could be pointed out to Sartre that, from reflection on experience, we can see that in life one develops a personality with its own fairly constant features which one cannot simply change at the drop of a hat as if it was of no consequence to one. Further, one can examine one's own "life story," see the particular shape it has taken and pin-point important events which one feels can be seen as reasons for the way one is today and for the course one's life has taken. In this light, it might seem that the notion of continual freedom does not do justice to our experience and that a deterministic approach would be more appropriate to the study of human life. Sartre himself concedes that in examining our acts determinism "does at least give the reason for each of them."[102]

Sartre nonetheless does not feel compelled to resort to determinism in order to study the life and personality of the human being. I have tried to demonstrate throughout that

Sartre's conception of freedom is a balanced one. In the first chapter, we looked at Sartre's view of what, in a basic sense, the human being is. I presented this view as a balanced picture of the human being as neither a purely physical nor purely "ghostly" entity but a unified conscious bodily existent. The human being, seen from this perspective I outlined, cannot be conscious without its physicality but nevertheless its consciousness cannot be reduced to that physicality. Its consciousness is the unity by which the existent is a "lived" experiencing physicality. Now in this chapter, we have heard how Sartre describes such an existent as a "freedom." The balance presented here is that, on the one hand, the human being cannot be determined to commit any particular act but, rather, decides on his or her own acts for his or her own motives and causes (thereby projecting his or her own future and giving his or her own reaction to his or her past) while, on the other hand, he or she acts in relation to a given world which "resists" the human being.

Sartre also puts forward, I will attempt to show, a balanced view of how we can study the personality and life story of a human being. For Sartre, the human being is neither pre-programmed with a specific personality and herded by fate along a particular path in life nor haphazardly conducting a series of random acts without any profound connections. For Sartre, the human being is a free for-itself which by its actions develops its own personality and decides its own course in life. On the one hand, the for-itself can change its personality and alter the course of its life but, on the other hand, these constitute a profound decision it has made

pre-reflectively and through which it sees the world. This is the for-itself's "way of life" and thus to change it, while being possible, is not a trifling matter but one of great consequence. Let us now explore in more detail this Sartrean view of the life of the human being.

(B) THE EXAMPLE OF THE FATIGUED HIKER

Sartre employs an interesting example in trying to show how we can view an individual human being as free but also place his or her acts within a broader pattern. He takes the case of a man on a hike with friends who is suffering from fatigue.[103] At first he tries to resist his fatigue and struggle on with his friends to the common resting place. But then suddenly he gives up and drops his knapsack down at the side of the road, letting himself fall down beside it. One of his friends might reproach him for this, meaning that he was free and could have chosen to do otherwise. Our erstwhile hiker, however, excuses himself by saying that he was just "too tired" to continue.

Sartre sides with neither protagonist here. He views the human being as free so he agrees that the hiker could have done otherwise. However, he sees the human being as free not just at each moment in isolation but as a total person. The individual freely makes himself or herself in the over all kind of person he or she is. The problem, then, according to Sartre, is not to decide whether or not the hiker was free at the moment he stopped. It is to decide whether or not he could have done otherwise without radically changing himself in his total person, such a change being a possibility for a

free human being. In this way, Sartre believes, he can study the hiker's act in relation to broader aspects of the person without denying his or her freedom.

According to Sartre, such an interest in the broader aspects of a person is one we already exercise in our every day lives. We can see from reflection on human experience, Sartre believes, that grasping the totality of a person is something we all do spontaneously.[104] The particular acts and gestures of a person seem to tell us something of the wider concerns he or she has, of his or her "character," if we want to use that term, or of "what makes him or her tick." We spontaneously take a general impression of the person from his or her acts. Sartre terms this type of understanding "comprehension."[105] A particular act, here, is seen as "comprehensive," it engages the person as a whole, and it is "comprehensible," it can be understood as part of a whole.[106] Sartre wishes to show how this comprehension can be practised in a more systematic fashion.

Here Sartre issues a note of warning. It can be easy to spot the pattern of a person's behaviour, find general labels for it and then stop there as if one now had the full explanation of that person's acts. E.g. we might say that the faltering hiker gave in to fatigue because "he is a sissy."[107] Or we might say that a person who engages in acts of conquest is spurred on by "ambition."[108] For Sartre, however, such labels are not sufficient.

We heard in the previous chapter how Sartre accepts that there is not any special mental substance or "ghost" within the human being. He thus agrees with behaviourism that all we have to go on in studying a person is his or her behaviour. From this point of view, the labels may be seen as only describing the behaviour. If there is no mental thing within us containing "sissyishness" or "ambition" then these labels only refer to the fact that a person behaves in such and such a way. Thus Sartre says that for the human being "to be is to act"[109] or "being is reduced to doing."[110] The human being's existence takes the form of acting in the world.

However, we also heard in the preceding chapter how Sartre, while discounting the notion of a separate mental substance, allows for one's own experience of oneself as "living" one's body and how in accordance with this he views the human being as a unified conscious bodily existent. Following on from this, we have in this chapter seen how Sartre allows for our experience of our acts as intentional or pursued for ends we posit ourselves. The behaviour of a person, then, on this view, is immediately <u>conscious</u> behaviour and Sartre wishes to attempt to comprehend it in relation to the totality of the person as consciousness. Here, to say that a person is a "sissy" or is "ambitious" is only a preliminary stage of describing the pattern of his or her behaviour. It is here that "comprehensiveness" comes in. Following his notion of the person as a whole, Sartre points to the reasons for an individual's behaviour as lying not only in the immediate goals of a particular act (e.g. the hiker stopping to relieve

his fatigue) but also in the broader concerns of that person in his or her totality.

Here, in this attempt to find a systematic form of comprehension, Sartre finds inspiration in the psychoanalytic school of thought begun by Freud. Sartre credits Freud with refusing to interpret the act in terms of a simple cause in the preceding moment but seeing it, rather, in relation to more profound structures of the person.[111] An act, for Freud, is not committed in isolation and for one simple mundane purpose but symbolically expresses at the same time a deeper desire which itself is a manifestation of the "complex" at the heart of the person.[112] "Psychoanalysis" is the method whereby these deeper structures can be brought to light.[113]

According to Sartre's reading of Freud, however, the latter's psychoanalytic thought is overloaded by a determinism which distorts the comprehension involved. In Freudian thought, Sartre says, it is what happens in the external environment, or our history, which determines the complex we have and this complex in turn is seen as the pre-existing cause of the acts which manifest it.[114]

This deterministic slant to Freudian thought, Sartre believes, leads to certain incongruities with experience. Against my experience of my act as precisely mine and as an attempt to create a future, Freudian thought views it as determined by the past.[115] Also, Freudian psychoanalysis involves someone from the outside uncovering the

"unconscious" deeper structures of the subject. For Sartre, this does not take account of our own implicit sense of the deeper structures of our acts.[116] Witness, he says, how the patient undergoing psychoanalysis, on having his or her complex revealed to him or her, not only accepts the revelation as an objective truth but personally recognizes the complex.[117]

Sartre, then, wishes to learn from Freud's procedure of analysing an act in terms of deeper structures but not from his determinist principles. He wants to show how such analysis can be carried out while accepting the human being as a free conscious existent.

Accordingly, Sartre attempts to set out the principles for an "existential psychoanalysis"[118] which will retain the idea of the particular act as expressive of deeper structures but which will see both the act and its structures in terms of a free choice. In Sartrean psychoanalytic thought, we view a particular act as immediately a project towards a freely chosen end. E.g. the hiker who stops does so in order to achieve relief from fatigue. But we also study it to see if it can be explained as part of a wider project. We must explain a particular choice, Sartre says, "to see whether it is not explained within the perspective of a larger choice in which it would be integrated as a secondary structure."[119] We must then examine this choice too to see if it itself is part of a yet more profound choice and then examine this latter choice in its turn. We proceed in this way to conduct a "regressive analysis"[120] taking us further and further back

until we reach a project which cannot be further interpreted and which is at the heart of the person being studied.

What Sartre means here is that by continually regressing from the particular acts of a person towards broader and broader projects in which they are integrated we can eventually discover a project or choice which is that of the person in his or her totality and which therefore can be broadened no further. For Sartre, the human being does not only have ends within the confines of each particular act. In his or totality, the human being is a for-itself conscious of itself in the world of objects and other people. Each for-itself has its own perception of this situation of its existence in the world and in relation to that situation the for-itself has its own desired way of finding completion or satisfaction. This is what makes up the for-itself's way of living.

This project of the human being in his or her totality is what Sartre terms the "original" project or choice.[121] It is "original" in that our particular desires, actions, projects etc. find their most profound meaning in it and constitute the concrete way this fundamental project is expressed. It is this project we sense when we form a wider impression of what a person is like.

Having conducted a regression back to the original project, one can then in a "progression"[122] place any particular act in its context within the totality of the person in question. It is in this way that Sartre attempts to allow for the lines

of consistency in a person without denying his or her freedom. He still insists that the human being can never be mechanically caused to commit a particular act. However, the occasion can arise when, on being confronted with a choice of action to be made, to choose to act in a particular way would not simply be to pick one of either insignificant options but would be to "go against the grain" of one's own approach to life, to behave differently in one's total person or, in other words, to change one's original project. As a free for-itself, one has the ability to choose this new type of act but only at the price of a self-conversion rather than as an idle whim.

These are the principles Sartre would employ in examining the case of the hiker who stopped and that of his critical companion who carried on. Both had the same training and both were fatigued yet one gave up and the other continued. To explain why, according to Sartre, we must trace their acts back to their original projects and look at the difference between these latter.

To take the case of the hiker who continued,[123] he might say, Sartre supposes, that he loves his fatigue. He enjoys maintaining the struggle against fatigue and encountering nature in this way. His particular choice of pressing on with the hike, then, refers to broader aspects of the person, i.e. his individual style of being an embodied person and his relation to nature. He likes to abandon himself to his bodily existence, to feel totally body and through this effort to conquer the mountains. This is how he attempts to

achieve completion, as if he had appropriated the being of the world itself in this way and united himself with it.

The wheezing hiker who refused to go any further, however, has a different way of living or a different original project and hence a different way of relating to his body and to nature.[124] He distrusts the world of being. He seeks satisfaction and completion through his relations with others. Let us suppose, for example, that he is a writer and strives to feel a complete person through the respect of his readers. Having such a project, the prospect of abandon to nature horrifies him. He does not want to lose himself and his completion by submersion in the natural world. It is through this project that he appears as a "sissy" unable to resist fatigue.

Sartre accepts the critic's strictures that the erstwhile hiker could have chosen to do otherwise than he did. However, to understand the person, following Sartre's principles, the revealing question to add is "but at what price?" That is, could he have done otherwise without a major transformation of his whole way of living or original project? In this case, Sartre says, the hiker's particular act of dropping to the ground

> "had to be interpreted in terms of an original project of which it formed an original part ... we cannot suppose that the act could have been modified without at the same time supposing a fundamental modification of [that] original choice ..."[125]

Sartre adds that such a modification "is moreover always possible."[126] It is in this way that he allows for the coherent aspects of a person without denying his or her freedom. The human being acts in accordance with a broader pattern but this pattern is itself freely chosen.

(C) CHOICE OF ONESELF AS A WHOLE IN THE WORLD AS A WHOLE

Here, however, a questioning person might seek to pin Sartre down and ask him how such a perspective of choice can be maintained in examining the life of an individual. For, as I noted earlier, we can see from experience how we sometimes act spontaneously according to personality without an, at any rate explicit, awareness of it at the time. E.g. the errant hiker, we could reasonably suppose, was not deliberating as to how he should relate to his body and to nature - he simply "felt like a rest."

A reading of BN, in my view, shows that Sartre himself is well aware of this possible objection. He responds to it by reiterating that he is operating with a view of consciousness as not a continual deliberative process but as originally non-thetic. He views the original project as something we are pre-reflectively conscious of.[127] To this, one might object that the concept of "pre-reflective" consciousness is an all too convenient one pressed into service by Sartre whenever his notion of continual freedom appears to conflict with the evidence of experience. I hope to show that, on the contrary, his use of such a concept is the means whereby he reaches a balanced approach under which he takes account both of how our acts of striving towards our personal desires

appear to us as our acts as experiencing individuals and of how we do not always nor even primarily contemplate explicitly on the deep meaning of these acts.

As we looked at earlier, in the first chapter, according to Sartre, the for-itself is pre-reflectively conscious of itself. Whatever particular thing I am explicitly conscious of at any moment, I am at the same time and in the very process of being conscious of the thing conscious of myself in a non-positional way. That is, I do not have to analytically think about myself or take up a position in relation to myself as an object in order to be conscious of myself. Rather, I am already "switched on" as an experiencing individual. My consciousness of the particular thing is already my experience. It is only given this condition that one has the ability to reflect on oneself. It is only if one is already pre-reflectively conscious that one can perform the cogito.

For Sartre, this notion of pre-reflective consciousness can be applied to our normal everyday activities. When we engage in particular concrete actions, Sartre notes, there are, in a very basic ordinary way, broader aspects of them which, though I am not specifically thinking about them at that moment, would not normally be thought of as "buried in the unconscious." Sartre takes the example of his own act of writing at that moment.[128] Although he is specifically aware of the sentence and paragraph he is writing now, he writes within a wider plan of the book he is producing and within the broader project of his philosophical activity in general.

He is not explicitly analysing these aspects at the moment but neither is he cut off from them. Without having to be explicitly pointed out they are integral to Sartre's very consciousness of writing a sentence. He is pre-reflectively conscious of them.

According to Sartre, the original project too fits into this type of scheme. For Sartre, there can be no generalized "personality" or "character" in the sense of a necessarily constant and steadfast pattern governing an individual's behaviour. To stress this, Sartre avoids the terms completely. I used them earlier in a cautious, provisional way. But for Sartre any human phenomenon, even what we call "personality," is an activity of a conscious existent, a project towards ends. For example, "having an inferiority complex" involves how I perceive myself in relation to others, how I will act in their presence and so on.[129] "Even assertions," says Sartre, "such as 'I am ugly,' 'I am stupid' etc. are by nature anticipations."[130] I project myself now and in the future as inferior in my activities in relation to other people. What is normally referred to, then, as one's "personality" is described by Sartre as a choice or project of oneself, the original project.

However, just as in his example Sartre simply wrote a paragraph without explicitly thinking of the role of philosophy in his life, so one does not ponder over one's original project. I am pre-reflectively conscious of it and it is expressed in the concrete activities I carry out. E.g.

my embarrassed and nervous speech before others expresses my sense of inferiority.

Sartre, then, does not attempt to claim that the original choice is a deliberate one expressly declared by the for-itself. However, as against the charge that he is using an escape clause, Sartre argues that the pre-reflective nature of the original choice is an integral aspect of how consciousness operates and that the pre-reflective awareness of the choice is nonetheless a very real and full consciousness of it.

For Sartre, consciousness is primarily pre-reflective and any deliberation must presuppose a pre-reflective choice. To make a reflective deliberate choice involves weighing up causes and motives and on that basis making a decision. However, as we heard Sartre say earlier, causes and motives can only be such in relation to some end and can only appear in relation to that end. Or as Sartre puts it himself:

> "It is necessary to defend oneself against the illusion which would make of original freedom a positing of causes and motives as objects, then a decision from [their] standpoint ... Quite the contrary, as soon as there are cause and motive (that is, an appreciation of things and of the structures of the world) there is already a positing of ends and consequently a choice."131

Thus, Sartre reasons, consciousness cannot engage in a pure deliberation. All deliberation presupposes a choice prior to deliberation, one that can only be made on the level of non-thetic consciousness.

What Sartre is saying here is, I believe, correct. It should be obvious to any student of human life that we do not spring up in the world as detached and neutral observers passively receiving data from it and then after consideration conducting the appropriate action. Rather, my very perception of the world is coloured through and through with my interests and concerns, it is already the perception of the kind of person I am. One's very involvement in the world already entails an original end or choice which is prior to deliberation or pre-reflective. Otherwise we would not be dealing with consciousness, which is of something and at the same time consciousness of self, but with a simple registering of data which would not even know itself as such and consequently could not even reach the stage of deliberation. To use Sartre's own expression, "one must be conscious in order to choose and one must choose in order to be conscious."[132]

Sartre is here portraying the original choice as bound up with one's very existence as an entity fundamentally conscious of itself (i.e. even before reflection) or, in other words, with one's very existence as a "switched on" centre of experience. Indeed, as Sartre phrases it, the original choice is "one with the consciousness which we have of ourselves."[133] It is the form my consciousness of self as a for-itself in the world takes. This entails, for Sartre, that the original choice is not "unconscious." I am fully conscious of it but in the same pre-reflective or non-thetic way that I am a consciousness of self; it is completely and

overflowingly present to me, it is what I live, not an outside object I can grab hold of.

It is because the original project is "one" with our consciousness of self that it is the project in which all our particular projects are integrated. Just as the world only is properly the "world" through our perception of it, so too it only appears through the pre-reflective choice I have made of myself. "I choose myself," says Sartre, "as a whole in the world which is a whole."[134] And just as when I perceive a particular object, I do so on the ground of the world as a whole, so too when I conduct a particular act or individual project, I do so on the ground of the total project which I as a consciousness of self am.

If we follow this idea through, the original project and the world appear as "correlative"[135] to each other and there is a sense in which our original project stares back at us in the face from outside. Neither the enthusiastic hiker nor the lazy hiker could create or abolish the hill but by their projects, it appears to one as exciting and challenging and to the other as tiresome and irritating. "We choose the world," says Sartre, "not in its contexture as in-itself but in its <u>meaning</u> by choosing ourselves" and the world refers back to us "exactly the image of what we are."[136] We do not engage in a continuous reflection on our original choice but we live it and confront it outside ourselves in object form. "Thus," Sartre tells us, "we are fully conscious of the choice which we are."[137]

If, however, we demand evidence of how we feel within ourselves a full consciousness of actually freely choosing, Sartre again points to the distinctive experience of anguish.[138] When we discussed anguish earlier, we noted how for Sartre it is a distinctive experience separate from simple fear of an external harmful object. Anguish is the feeling of being troubled about oneself and one's actions irrespective of whether or not one's personal safety is at risk and thus, according to Sartre, is the preserve of a free existent. On this view, then, it is only through his or her freedom that the human being can experience anguish.

"Anguish, abandonment, responsibility," Sartre now adds, "whether muted or full strength, constitute the quality of our consciousness in so far as this is pure and simple freedom."[139] What Sartre is saying here is that one is constantly (non-thetically) conscious of choosing one's original project and by the same token conscious of one's ability to choose differently. One constantly has the "trouble" of choosing. The feeling of anguish is a concrete form the consciousness of this trouble takes. To feel anguished, to be troubled about one's choice is, under Sartre's analysis, to be aware of the "contingency" of one's choice.[140] It is to be aware that one is freely making a choice and that therefore one need not continue to choose that way. It is to be aware that as a freedom I live my choice without any solid external guarantee that it is necessary. Or, as Sartre phrases it, in anguish "we apprehend ourselves as unjustifiable."[141] We are aware that

"we ourselves can abruptly invert this choice and reverse steam."[142]

As further evidence of how we consciously and freely make an original choice, Sartre also points to the experience of what he terms the "instant."[143] Instants, for Sartre, are those moments when someone actually puts into operation the possibility of choosing differently and overthrows his or her original project in favour of another, e.g. an atheist who converts to a religion.[144]

In the section on time, we noted how it is impossible to pin time down to an absolutely indivisible instant. Neither, says Sartre, can we perceive ourselves engaged in an activity in an absolute instant. Everything we do involves projecting a future to become present and leaving behind a past. Similarly, we are not conscious of thetically making an original choice in one absolute instant and then reaffirming it in the next instant and then in the next instant again and so on. Rather, I am non-thetically conscious of choosing a continuous project which perpetually places a certain goal ahead of me. The long-running project which I live is the immediate expression of my continuous choice. "The recovery," Sartre says, "is so narrowly joined to the ensemble of the process that it has no instantaneous meaning and cannot have any."[145]

The only identifiable moment Sartre can see that merits being singled out as a distinct "instant" is the point at which someone overturns his or her original project and makes a new

choice. Even this instant could not be narrowed down to an absolutely indivisible unit of time but it is distinct as a point which is the end of an old project and the beginning of a new one. The person identifies the present as the beginning of a new project in relation to the new future he or she sets out and by the same effort marks it out as the moment the old choice becomes past.[146]

Sartre sees these moments when a person makes a radical transformation of his or her life as a dramatic demonstration of the freedom he or she already was. I carry out a project freely and continuously but I am <u>non-thetically</u> conscious of it and so it is not directly before me as a matter for consideration. But because I am free, it is always possible that I will turn on the immediate past that I was simply living, make an object of it and make a new choice of project. "The spectre of the instant," Sartre declares, perpetually haunts our choice.[147] "These extraordinary and marvellous instants," Sartre notes, "...have often appeared to furnish the clearest and most moving image of our freedom," though "they are only one among others of its many manifestations."[148]

We have now seen how Sartre presents and defends his concept of the original choice. In introducing it, I portrayed it as a balanced tool for studying the personality of the human being. I view it this way because what we have discussed about it already shows, I believe, that it avoids two opposite extreme points from which to view the personality of the human being and instead represents a third position which

fits in with our own human experience which itself suggests the inappropriateness of the two extremes.

One of these extreme approaches, which we saw earlier that Sartre rejects, is to view the human being as "programmed" in his or her behaviour with a given personality. No matter how complex the process of programming is said to be, this type of approach entails that we find ourselves spontaneously operating in our actions, emotions, tastes, etc. in accordance with a program which we do not even understand. Now certainly we do act according to a broader pattern which we do not sit down and deliberately design as in an intellectual exercise. And to be sure, we do not always nor even primarily go through an intellectual exercise to decide what our next act will be. However, Sartre's objections to this type of position have pointed to aspects of human experience which tell against adopting this extreme. Our acts, in our experience, appear to us as <u>our</u> acts towards ends. And our particular acts do have in some, even if non-intellectual, way <u>meaning</u> for us as part of a wider way of living which we are responsible for carrying out. The example of the feeling of anguish, which we can all relate to, rather strikingly bears witness to that. A positivist, causal "programming" approach, then, does not, looked at this way, properly account for human personality.

However, it would also jar with our experience if we were to jump to the opposite extreme and treat consciousness as if it operated at only one level, the reflective, deliberate one and view the human individual as freely choosing his or her

personality at that level. As against this view, we have already discussed how we often spontaneously act in accordance with our "character" without going through a deliberative process. Sartre has also rightly pointed out that world on which we deliberate is already the world as we perceive it so that any deliberation already presupposes pre-deliberative interests, concerns and attitudes.

In rejecting the first extreme and defending "freedom," Sartre avoids this other extreme. Instead, his view of the free non-thetic original choice is a balanced position which proceeds from reflection on human life and tries to give an account of it which we can see fits in with that experience of ours. Sartre, then, does not mean by "freedom" that the human individual sits down as a neutral intellect and after deliberation picks an "off the peg" personality. But he is pointing out that the "personality" we display is a broader pattern of acts we carry out which mean something for us and which we desire to engage in. Even though not in a deliberate intellectual way, it is we who produce our "personality" and it is only because of this responsibility that we can feel anguish about it. To account for this experience, Sartre puts forward his view of the human individual as free at the level of non-thetic consciousness in making an original choice - his or her own way of looking at the world and his or her place within it - which is expressed through his or her acts.

(D) THE "INFERIORITY COMPLEX" EXAMPLE

We can, I believe, gain a clearer picture of the balance of Sartre's position and its usefulness by looking at his discussion of the "inferiority complex."[149] In traditional psychoanalytic thought, this complex involves a deep feeling of inferiority and ill balanced attempts to offset or hide this feeling. Sartre accepts this. However, traditional psychoanalysis also views the feeling as locked in the "unconscious" and thus as the cause - unknown to him or her - of some of the individual's acts in his or her conscious life. For Sartre, this is an unacceptable dismembering of the unity of the human being. As the so-called "unconscious" is credited with feelings and desires and so on, it is really a form of consciousness and so the dichotomy amounts to supposing two separate consciousnesses one of which mysteriously acts on the other. But in keeping with the balance we have been talking about, Sartre does not attempt to claim that a person with an inferiority complex produces and maintains it as a deliberate intellectual exercise. He tries to show how an individual as a unified consciousness can spontaneously exhibit such a complex or, in Sartre's terminology, engage in the project of inferiority.

Sartre takes the example of a man who remains in an occupation where he is inferior even though he would be as good as anyone else in some other field of work.[150] He does this because he prefers to be last rather than be lost in the crowd. Sartre tries to show how this case can be seen in terms of his conception of consciousness as unitary but primarily non-thetic while being able, secondarily and within the unity, to operate at a thetic or reflective level.

The person's feeling that he can only achieve distinction from the mass through inferiority is not an intellectual hypothesis but a spontaneous attitude he as a non-thetic consciousness assumes. Sartre, then, is not saying that the person reflectively decides to have an inferiority complex, but he is saying that our deep attitudes about ourselves, even when they make us suffer, are enacted by ourselves as consciousness. Hence Sartre's statement that the original choice "is not necessarily nor even frequently made in joy."[151] So rather than reflectively choosing a complex, the person as a full over-flowing consciousness of self prior to any secondary reflection "produce[s] and ... assume[s] the rebellion and despair which constitute the revelation of this inferiority."[152]

To assume this inferiority, the person has to make use of his or her unity as a non-thetic consciousness of self capable of operating secondarily as a thetic consciousness. He reflectively <u>wills</u> to be a great artist so that when he inevitably fails, his pre-reflective project of inferiority is realized. His thetic will to be superior is a tool of his non-thetic project of inferiority. It is, for Sartre, another piece of bad faith. "Thus," Sartre says:

> "the man who suffers from <u>Mindwertigkeit</u> has <u>chosen</u> to be his own tormentor. He has chosen shame and suffering, which does not mean, however, that he is to experience any joy when they are most forcefully realized."[153]

This example, in my view, is a good illustration of how Sartre has reached a balanced position whereby he sees our fundamental attitudes about ourselves and our place in the world as our product freely made by us but spontaneously and non-reflectively. This fits our experience of not immediately having a verbalized set-out knowledge of ourselves but yet implicitly having the feel of what we are about and living a life that is meaningful to us and which we can be anguished about rather than operating according to an unknown program. We can note here again Sartre's point about how the psychoanalytic patient who is cured, personally recognizes the "complex" revealed to him or her by the analyst.

What we have discussed about Sartre's concept of the original choice can now be seen in conjunction with what we looked at in the first chapter regarding the existence of the human being as a unified conscious bodily existent in the world. Our picture of that existence is enriched by the concept. We now have a broader view of the human being as a unified conscious bodily existent conscious of the world and who, by that same consciousness, is conscious of itself and makes a choice of its way of life in the world. The for-itself, by its consciousness of the in-itself, is conscious of itself and makes the in-itself a world as such. By the very same process, the for-itself assumes its own outlook on the world and its own way of living in the world.

(E) EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOANALYSIS AND THE COURSE OF HUMAN LIFE

We were introduced to the concept of the original choice in

the course of our discussion of the principles Sartre sets out for an "existential psychoanalysis." This is the method and procedure by which Sartre believes we should study the "personality" and "life story" of any particular individual. Its central principle is the one we have in fact just been looking at, i.e. to view the human individual as a for-itself making its own choice of life in the world. Let us now briefly look at some of the details of the guidelines Sartre lays down for carrying out an existential psychoanalytic investigation of an individual. From this we will see how, from the base of this concept of the choosing for-itself, Sartre envisages the way that the course of life of a human individual runs.

In keeping with what we said earlier about the regressive search for the broadest possible project, when studying an individual under existential psychoanalysis, we must compare the particular projects of the person to see what links can be found between them that will lead us back to his or her original project through which we will then interpret the particular activities.[154] However, Sartre's emphasis on the original project as being a <u>choice</u> has important consequences for how we are to employ this concept of the relation of the broad to the particular.

First of all, because of this status of the original project as freely chosen and therefore contingent, Sartre stresses that we must not see it as an absolute blueprint from which our every particular act in every detail logically ensues. There is no universally applicable scheme by which we can

solidly identify an individual as of a certain type from which we can then deduce all his or her particular acts. The individual chooses the original project and also the secondary projects by which he or she expresses it. The secondary projects too, then, are contingent. The attempt to understand a particular project in terms of a broader project, Sartre tells us, "is the interpretation of a factual connection and not the apprehension of a necessity."[155]

There are also instances, Sartre notes, where the original project is compatible with various options of detail in an action which differ from each other but remain within the bounds of the project. For example, he says, the reluctant hiker could, within the bounds of his original project, either stop at the side of the road or, alternatively, abandon the hike by dropping in to the inn a little further on.[156] Sartre, borrowing from the Stoics, terms these options "indifferents."[157] Either option will express the original project and it is up to the person to decide which it will be. "In relation to these indifferents," Sartre declares, "our freedom is entire and unconditioned."[158]

On Sartre's view, of course, it is always possible for the individual to cause an instant to arise by overturning the original project and choosing another. An existential psychoanalytic investigation, then, has to be flexible so as to allow for the individual's own peculiar way of expressing his or her original project and also for "instantaneous" aspects of change. Under existential psychoanalytic investigation, then, we do not see the individual as just any

individual who is possessed of certain random psychological givens, e.g. "ambition," which cause certain acts in keeping with these categories. We see the individual as choosing his or her own project of life and investigate why he or she chooses to express it in the particular way he or she does. We trace how he or she maintains and develops the original project through the secondary projects or, alternatively, transforms it. We trace an individual personal journey whose route is the continual responsibility of the traveller in question.

In common with Freud, Sartre looks at the early stages of the journey in childhood. Following its Freudian counterpart, existential psychoanalysis searches for "the crucial event of infancy and the psychic crystallisation around this event."[159] But for Sartre, this constitutes the coming into focus of a contingent choice rather than a solid complex and the subsequent course of the individual's life reflects this.

By his or her particular acts, we have heard, the individual develops his or her original project, maintaining it in this process or transforming it. These acts slip into the past and, as we noted earlier, some of them can be pin-pointed by us as important landmarks in our personal "life story" which we might say "made us what we are today." But for Sartre, these past acts were our own responsibility in the first place and although the past cannot be undone it remains the responsibility of the human individual to commit the further acts that will confirm the past acts as landmarks or show them to be unimportant isolated aberrations. We decide the

meaning of the past by our subsequent actions. For example, Sartre says, if I had a "mystic crisis" at the age of fifteen, it is up to me to decide by my future actions what its significance is in the course of my life. If I choose to remain unconverted then I leave it as a "pure accident of puberty." If, on the other hand, I choose to be converted at the age of twenty or thirty then I can reassign it new meaning as the first sign of a future conversion.[160] "It is I always I" who must decide how the course of my life develops.[161]

The course of any human individual's life, then, under Sartre's approach, is one in which that individual continually makes a free contingent choice of original project and similarly chooses the particular acts by which he or she expresses it. By his or her acts the individual can maintain and develop the project or radically alter it but there is no necessity at any point; it is always down to the free contingent choice of the person what is to happen. If the person does change his project, there is still an element of continuity in that the new choice does not mean a new existence totally separate from the person in his former choice. For the new choice is also the rejection of the old one so that the previous choice is part of the situation in relation to which the new one is made. The human individual in the course of his or her life is a mixture of constancy and changeability; as a unitary existent unfolding one personal life story, he or she expresses a broad primary project which becomes part of his or her situation in

relation to which he or she will remain "true to form," develop, or change.

This continual freedom entails, for Sartre, that the meaning of an individual's life remains constantly open until it gets contingently and accidentally closed at the moment of death.[162] The human individual writes his or her own script, improvising as he or she goes along. He or she is still writing it until the moment of death strikes, leaving the script stopped where it is. The story is over but the end is an arbitrary one. The person just so happened to have died at that point. Had the person lived on, there might have been further developments or changes. But an arbitrary end has been reached. The arbitrariness of the end is purely the corollary of the freedom of the individual. If the individual freely shapes his or her own life, the final shape left after death is only final by dint of the contingent event of death. It was not a pre-destined fate ; the person freely chose it and could have gone on to make further choices.

We will return to the subject of death later but for the moment we can see that under Sartre's approach, the course of life of a human individual is one in which the latter freely chooses his or her own original project and freely expresses it in his or her own way at any given stage, maintaining and developing it or radically transforming it. The task of existential psychoanalysis is to find out the individual's original project and investigate why he or she expressed it in the particular ways he or she did.

This investigation, Sartre stresses, must be carried out objectively - even if the person one is studying is oneself.[163] Sartre distinguishes between the non-thetic self-consciousness I have which entails the total apprehension of oneself all at once without an outside focus and in which I can never be mistaken and reflective attempts at gaining objective knowledge of oneself where the possibility of error arises.[164]

Sartre notes that a psychoanalytic patient undergoing treatment can make such errors. Sartre takes the example of a man with an inferiority complex who, having reflected on his situation, wills to have his stuttering cured for the purpose of an improved social appearance. However, he does not in this way touch his original project of inferiority of which the stuttering was an expression. So the stuttering is cured but he then expresses his project with a new symptom. "Partial medications," says Sartre, "only succeed in displacing the manifestations."[165]

For Sartre, then, existential psychoanalysis requires something outside of our un-focused all-encompassing non-thetic self-consciousness but at the same time something deeper than a superficial reflection. What is required is an objective probing search for the original project. Even if the subject is oneself one must examine oneself in this objective way, as if one was studying another person.[166]

In balance to this, however, Sartre also holds that the reflections of the subject (if access to them is possible) form part of the evidence to be studied and that the investigation should contribute to the subject's own self-recognition of his or her own project of self. "It is existential psychoanalysis," Sartre says, "which claims the final intuition of the subject as decisive."[167]

(F) THE DESIRE TO BE IN-ITSELF-FOR-ITSELF

It has not been my intention here to enter into a detailed discussion of the whole complex field of psychiatry and psychoanalysis.[168] I have been looking at Sartre's existential psychoanalysis because it reveals another aspect of his concept of what the human being is. We had seen earlier that, for Sartre, the human being is a conscious bodily for-itself conscious of the world and of itself and which freely conducts its own acts. Now, after our look at existential psychoanalysis, we see that Sartre adds that the human being, in the very same process, makes his or her own individual choice of his or way of life in the world and is responsible for the development of his or her own "life story" on this basis.

However, we cannot leave our consideration of Sartre's existential psychoanalysis here. For there is another aspect of it which is of crucial importance in his view of what the human being is. Sartre does not simply leave us to get on with investigating the original choices of individuals. Although he denies that there is any "human nature" in the sense of a pre-determined blueprint which we slavishly

follow, he nevertheless places the original choice of any individual within a common theoretical framework regarding what the choice at a deep level means for us. This framework is central to Sartre's interpretation of human life so let us examine it now.

According to Sartre, the original project of every for-itself is fundamentally a desire "to be."[169] In the previous chapter, we saw how, for Sartre, the existence of the for-itself is "like" an attempt of the in-itself to found itself. It is "as if" the solid being-in-itself which just happens to exist attempts to gain control of itself and escape its contingency by achieving consciousness of itself. It would then be a solid totality of being-in-itself but at the same time conscious of itself. Or in Sartre's terminology, it would be "in-itself-for-itself."[170]

However, we saw that, for Sartre, this totality is not achieved because the resultant for-itself, by being conscious of itself, separates itself from the in-itself as not being it. Under Sartre's analysis, as we discussed earlier, this has the consequence that the for-itself can never be identified with anything, not even its own self. Any activity I carry out, even my most cherished project, any desire or emotion of mine is not what I solidly am, the way a rock just is a rock. Everything the for-itself does is infected with negativity.

Sartre sees the original project in the context of this negative existence. He portrays the for-itself as

fundamentally desiring solidity of being. However, it is as a negating consciousness or for-itself that it has this desire. It wishes to have the solidity of being of the in-itself in its existence as a for-itself. It wants in its turn to be "in-itself-for-itself," to be a conscious existent which yet is totally complete and has solidity of being. This is the ideal which, Sartre notes, religion normally attributes to "God."[171] "[M]an," he declares, "fundamentally is the desire to be God."[172] Our own original project or choice of way of life in the world - which we express in our particular activities - is, then, according to Sartre, our own way of reaching towards this goal.

Two questions immediately spring to mind on reading this. The first question - to which Sartre turns straight away - is: after all he has been saying about freedom, has not Sartre finally told against it by portraying the human being as following a pre-set nature, that of the desire to be God?[173] Secondly, do we take it from Sartre's view of the fundamental project that the human condition is utterly futile, bleak and depressing? After all, he has said that the human being fundamentally is a project which is doomed to failure. The human being, he says, is a failed project of being God and he drives this point home quite mercilessly when he declares that "[m]an is a useless passion."[174]

By taking a closer look at how Sartre arrives at this view of the fundamental project, I hope to show that he is not positing a "human nature" but is saying something important

about life as consciousness and that we do not necessarily have to see this in bleak terms.

First of all, in portraying the human being as fundamentally a project of being God, Sartre is not arbitrarily imposing some pet theory of human nature on all humanity, as if choosing from the outside some set formula which would then be applied to any human individual. Rather, this view of the human being arises from Sartre's investigation of human consciousness and points out what is, for him, an integral aspect of what it is to be a conscious existent.

We heard earlier how Sartre argues that a pure consciousness on its own would not be possible since it would have nothing to be conscious of. The world, he says, is a realm of independent being-in-itself as it appears through our consciousness of it and the for-itself is conscious by being conscious of itself as not being this in-itself. For Sartre, then, that the fundamental project of the human being is concerned with "being" flows from human existence itself. Since the human being as a conscious for-itself is fundamentally a (negative) relation to being, his or her original project is fundamentally a concern for this relation. Hence Sartre's statement that "the original project of a for-itself <u>can aim only at its being</u>."[175]

For Sartre, as we have heard, what makes the for-itself a conscious experiencing existent is its negating of being-in-itself as that which it is not. Integral to the for-itself's "not being" the in-itself is that it is not "like" the in-

itself, i.e. it has a different mode of existence. Being-in-itself, according to Sartre, as we have heard, simply is what it is. It simply exists solidly and in anonymity as what it is. The for-itself, in contrast, cannot have a solid existence, it can never fully be what it is, not even its own self. The for-itself is "for-itself," is a conscious experiencing existent, by being conscious of itself at the same time as and through being conscious of itself as not being the in-itself. Concomitantly, it is conscious of not being anything in the mode of the in-itself. Since it achieves consciousness by and through separating itself off from the in-itself, neither can it be solidly identified with any of its own activities or characteristics.

So far, then, Sartre has put forward two main points: that the for-itself is such by not being being-in-itself and that this entails not being <u>like</u> being-in-itself. However, there is a third position we can draw from Sartre's position and this takes us to the heart of the matter. This is that the for-itself accomplishes this negation through a continual desire to be in the mode of the in-itself and through the continual realization of its failure to achieve this goal.

The for-itself is conscious of its particular projects and activities in ideal form. It has to be consciousness <u>of something</u>, so it is not first of all a reflective knowledge that it is a negation of its own projects. Rather, the for-itself puts forward its particular project as what it what it wants "to be" in full solid form. Let us suppose, for example, that I decide to spend an afternoon studying. I

want to be in ideal form a person who is studying, as if studying were my total nature. However,when I actually do the studying, I find it just cannot match up to the ideal. At first, I find difficulty getting focused on the subject matter and I get distracted. Then I discipline myself to concentrate and I study. I succeed in getting a piece of work done but yet my studying just did not match up to the ideal. It was an effort I sustained, it was not something I could be solidly identified with. It was not my total being.

According to Sartre's understanding, this type of experience is repeated continually in human life. Feelings, ambitions achieved, even something as simple as drinking a glass of water to quench one's thirst,[176] never fully match up to the ideal. Sartre terms this experience "ontological disillusion."[177] I do what I wanted to do, I achieve the goal I set out to achieve but I ask myself "is it only this?"[178] Something still feels missing.

For Sartre, this type of experience is a concrete particular expression of what we heard him describe as the for-itself's desire to be "in-itself-for-itself," to remain a conscious existent yet achieve solidity of being. This is Sartre's ontological description of the endless human quest for "self-fulfilment" or to "find oneself." The for-itself wants to be "complete." It wants to be its character, carry out its activities, feel and think as a grand complete totality. However, as we heard Sartre say earlier, to achieve this state of being in-itself-for-itself is impossible. To achieve completeness, to achieve the "in-itself" part of the

equation would be to cancel out the "for-itself" part. Consciousness, for Sartre, depends on negation and incompleteness. Once the for-itself became in-itself, once it had solid being, it would no longer be a negation of being or a consciousness to be able to appreciate its completeness. It would be a mute plenitude of being, plain "in-itself" rather than "in-itself-for-itself." Yet the for-itself continually strives for the latter and is continually thwarted. This is the Sartrean version of the "unhappy consciousness." The human being, says Sartre, "is by nature an unhappy consciousness with no possibility of surpassing its unhappy state."[179] The idea of God is a projection outside the world of an existent which has achieved the impossible completeness.[180]

However, according to Sartre, it is through striving for the in-itself-for-itself and realizing its failure to achieve this that the for-itself is a conscious existent conscious of itself as not being anything that it is conscious of, even its own projects. It is by being conscious of myself as studying but yet feeling that I am not matching up to the ideal of a studying being that I can have the experience of studying rather than be an automaton going through the motions. The for-itself is conscious by negating the in-itself as that which it is not and as that from which it has a different mode of existence. And it has a different mode of existence precisely through its continual realization that it has failed to be in the mode of the in-itself, to be in-itself-for-itself. Or in Sartre's own words:

> "The for-itself in its being is failure ... this failure is its very being, but it has meaning only if the for-itself apprehends itself as failure in the presence of the being which it has failed to be ..."181

When we look at it this way, Sartre is not imposing from the outside a set nature on humanity but, rather, explaining the fundamentals of how consciousness is possible and how it operates. Each human individual lives this "structure of existence," if we can call it that, in his or her own way with his or her own particular desires and choice of way of life which give expression to the abstract notion that the human being is an attempt to be in-itself-for-itself. In Sartre's terminology, he is setting out the general "truth" about the human type of existence, "freedom," rather than a traditional theory of human nature.[182] He has set out in general terms what human existence as free consciousness is like but it is from individuals freely carrying on with their own projects that this generality can be extracted. Sartre, then, is not telling against freedom but simply exploring what it is.

One might still feel, however, that we could continue to insist that Sartre is telling against the freedom he attempts to attribute to us. For, the objection could be made, the human being's ability to freely act, under Sartre's analysis, presupposes a prior determinism, that he or she is a deluded attempt to become in-itself-for-itself.

I do not believe that this objection is justified. Sartre is again, I believe, putting forward a balanced position which

fits in with human experience. What Sartre terms the "desire to be in-itself-for-itself" should be easily recognized by most people as something we are well aware of from our own experience: the normal human striving for self-fulfilment or happiness. Most people will also readily recognize the experience of "ontological disillusionment" that Sartre speaks of. We achieve goals we have set ourselves in our project of self-fulfilment but still cannot feel totally satisfied and complete. Even when one achieves a cherished goal and is ecstatic about it, one still cannot help feeling that slight air of detachment from the situation. One then has to go on living and pursuing one's next projects.

Sartre conceptualizes this situation as the for-itself striving to be in-itself-for-itself but always coming up against the fact that it is still simply for-itself. I do not believe that this is tantamount to Sartre setting out his own version of a prior determinism. He is, rather, after a study grounded in human experience, identifying an aspect of how consciousness operates. Just as we cannot be conscious without the independent world of outside being to relate to, neither can we be conscious of ourselves without being aware that we are not completely identified and at rest with the ideal self we projected becoming.

An important point here, also, is that Sartre regards the attempt to become in-itself-for-itself as a <u>self</u>-delusion rather than a plain delusion. In the conclusion to <u>BN</u> Sartre states that, through existential psychoanalysis, we can come to explicit knowledge of our quest for the in-itself-for-

itself.[183] Having reached that stage, Sartre then raises the prospect of an individual renouncing the ideal of in-itself-for-itself and placing value in freedom for its own sake.[184] Under such an attitude, the for-itself would still in its various projects see before himself or herself their ideal in the in-itself-for-itself but freely accept that the ideal would never be attained. He or she would place value in this "failure" that allowed him or her to remain a free conscious human being and freely accept the responsibility of living this situation and carrying on with his or her projects.[185]

The idea that we have the ability to struggle with the desire to be in-itself-for-itself and that we can attempt in some way to overcome it is itself a demonstration that Sartre is not proceeding along his own deterministic lines. However, paradoxically, this issue does show a tension in Sartre's thought. On the one hand, Sartre believes that we are free and that any attempts to avoid our freedom or seek refuge in a deluded attempt to reach ideal completion are themselves free actions of the for-itself freely putting itself in bad faith. On the other hand, Sartre portrays the human being acting spontaneously and non-thetically in this bad faith and having to work at seeing through it and overcoming it. We have seen that he even sees the spontaneous consciousness of a project in ideal form as an aspect of how consciousness operates.

However, I would argue that this is a tension which does not require to be resolved. It is a tension which reflects human experience and is part of Sartre's balanced approach to the

human being. Sartre is not saying that the human being is a pure intellectual force, reflectively aware of itself at all times and deliberately planning its every move. What he is saying is that the human being is not the kind of entity that can be studied in simple cause and effect terms. The human being is an integrated conscious bodily existent. In a spontaneous, non-reflective yet conscious fashion, every human being has his or her own approach to life and self-fulfilment. But simply because the human being is such an experiencing and striving existent, we can never reach total self-fulfilment. In experiencing a situation rather than being submerged in it, we are always subject to that element of detachment which prevents us from being totally complete like a statue or a character in a story. This aspect of our experience is something we are aware of all at once without reflection as we get on with living. But we also have the ability to stop and reflect on it and in doing so we can place value in our failure ever to reach total completion and the freedom that this entails.

Now we can turn to the question of whether Sartre's picture of the for-itself as a failed attempt to be God means that his view of the human situation is "bleak." As I have said, Sartre's philosophy is about exploring what the human type of existence, freedom, is like. Sartre has concluded that the human being contingently exists as the negation of the contingent being-in-itself and in this way exists as a free conscious for-itself. Sartre has simply explored what it is like to live as a freedom. There is then in his philosophy no commandment carved in stone to guarantee either pessimism

or optimism about human life. If we keep in line with what Sartre has said about how one chooses one's way of life or, loosely, "personality," then we must say that in the Sartrean scheme it is up to the individual human being to choose a pessimistic, optimistic or other attitude.

One could look at life from the angle of its deficiencies, feeling depressed that one can never reach completeness and that one will eventually die. Or one could be glad to be alive in the first place and relish the responsibility of deciding on one's own projects. It is up to the individual to take his or her own perspective, though for Sartre, of course, to shelter behind either would be self-delusion or bad faith and still fail to result in completeness. There is nothing in Sartre's philosophy to compel us to either view.

What we can say, I believe is that Sartre personally does not intend to advocate a bleak attitude. His notion of the human being as a failure to be God is placed within the context of allowing human freedom to be possible. With his view that we can never reach total completeness and always feel an element of dissatisfaction, Sartre is not a wild eyed optimist in a state of continual happy delirium. But neither is he suicidal! The constant dissatisfaction is again an aspect of freedom and, as I said earlier, Sartre holds also that we can reach self-knowledge about our type of existence. The constant dissatisfaction is again an aspect of freedom and, as I said earlier, Sartre holds also that we can reach self-knowledge about our type of existence, place value on it and live freely on this basis.

2.6 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FREEDOM OF THE FOR-ITSELF

Now that we have examined what the life of the free for-itself is like, we can, as I promised earlier, consider the question of what significance should be attached to the freedom Sartre attributes to the human being. In my view, this freedom is of immense significance. From reflecting on human experience, Sartre has highlighted the freedom which is the foundation which allows us to have a meaningful life in the first place. The freedom Sartre attributes to us is the original and very basic freedom of not being trapped as a mere thing submerged in the indifferent being-in-itself. It is the freedom of being a conscious existent who, in relation to the given world, must carry out his or her own projects.

However, there are two main areas I wish to explore of possible concern regarding the significance of Sartrean freedom. The first relates to Sartre's view of death (which we discussed briefly earlier) and the effect this could have on the level of significance we attach to Sartrean freedom. The second relates to the human being's place within wider society and what it means for the significance of Sartrean freedom. Let us begin with the first area.

I have throughout been talking of Sartre's philosophy as placing the human being in a "realm of meaning" in that he or she is not seen as a mere thing but as a for-itself who is conscious of things or for whom things have meaning. However, Sartre states that death robs an individual's life

of all meaning and renders it absurd. If that is so, does that not leave Sartrean "freedom" with no significance whatsoever?

If we have a proper understanding of Sartre's view of death then, I believe, we do not reach such a conclusion. Sartre is here referring to "meaning" in a very specific sense. He is talking of meaning in the sense in which we talk of the meaning of a tune or a book.[186] The composer or author intentionally produces a piece of work. The work has its structure. It has a deliberately produced beginning and is brought to a planned end. The result is a complete work with an external "justification" in a sense, from its creator.

Human life, on the other hand, according to Sartre, has no such prior justification. We just happen to be born and we just happen to die. We did not ask to be born, we just find ourselves in existence. Similarly, our death is a contingent event. It is not like the last chapter of a novel or the last note of a melody which are intended to complete a piece of work, giving it a "proper ending." We die, says Sartre, "in the bargain."[187] Sartre is here being quite logical. He does not go through the pretence of making a virtue out of a necessity. Human life without death would still be finite.[188] Our actions would still become past and unalterable. Death is contingent. It just so happens that human beings die. There is no mystical reason for death as the necessary means to "complete" our life. Death simply cuts off one's life arbitrarily at that point, in contrast with the last note of a melody intended to complete the work.

It is in that sense, for Sartre, that death makes life meaningless. One's life eventually meets the accident of death and is cut off where it is. If, then, for example, a man ends his life as a drunk then being a drunk is the arbitrary end of the course of his life. Had he lived longer, he may have continued the same way or reformed; we will never know. His life has just come to an absurd end. There was no prior script giving him the character of a drunk and supplying him with a final drunk's death scene.

Life, then, for Sartre, is meaningless in the specific sense that it has no prior "destiny" to allow us to feel that our life can become a neatly completed story with a necessary end. We just happen to die, leaving our life rudely cut off and showing ragged edges. However, the meaninglessness of death is not something we will ever actively experience for ourselves. The moment one is dead, one is not there to experience it. While we live we continue with the responsibility of giving our own meaning to our life, however contingent and non-definitive that meaning is.

The ultimate meaninglessness of life is again, for Sartre, part of what being free entails. Sartre holds that if God existed, created us and could choose the moment of our demise, then that would give him the power to determine an ultimate meaning of our lives. Sartre illustrates the point by recounting the story of two brothers who appear at the divine tribunal on the day of judgement. The first asks God why he made him die so young. God replies that had he lived

longer he would have committed a crime like his brother. The other brother then asks God why he made him die so old.[189]

We might then ask if normal incidental death does not similarly leave us with a given meaning to our life (e.g. in the case of the man we considered earlier, he was a drunk) and just as surely deprive our freedom of significance. My answer would be "no." Incidental death does not provide meaning as in a tune or a book but simply ends life at that point without any particular "sense" to it or, in Sartre's terminology, "absurdly."[190] This leaves it the responsibility of the individual for-itself at all times to make its own sense out of his or her life, with none provided at the outset and none the for-itself creates allowed to become a necessary definitive one beneath which shelter could be found.

Let us now consider the second area of concern. I spoke above of Sartrean freedom as the freedom of "not being trapped as a mere <u>thing</u> submerged in the indifferent being-in-itself" and of "being a conscious existent who, in relation to the given world, must carry out his or her own projects." What is distinctive about Sartre's position here is his identification of freedom with consciousness. Much hinges on this identification but I believe it can be shown that a strong case can be put forward to justify it.

I discussed in the first chapter how the human being - at the same time as existing as a physical body in the physical world - has the feeling of being an "experiencing centre."

As an experiencing centre, the things and events of the world "mean" something to me and I engage in meaningful thoughts, feelings and actions in relation to them. It has been my argument that this conscious experience is as much part of the evidence to be considered as is the physicality of the human being. If we view our consciousness as being identical with or being "in reality only" a complicated physical process, we paradoxically render the very statement of that view reduced to a purely physical happening. There are only physical happenings and no experiencing centre to lift them out of anonymity. Yet in the face of this theoretical consequence, we still have the evidence of our conscious experience.

I have argued that it is therefore better to accept consciousness as such rather than to view it as being explained away as an illusion behind which lies the reality of a different process. Sartre's model allows us to do precisely that. It is important to point out here - in contrast, perhaps, to the popular image of Sartre - that his position is a very considered and balanced one. He neither implausibly posits a new spiritual entity inhabiting the body nor does he devalue our conscious experience by identifying it with a physical process. His concept of the human being as a "for-itself," a conscious existent "living" the body or a "body-for-itself" entails a view of consciousness as arising from the body but in so arising existing as consciousness. It is to say that we must take a holistic approach to the human being based on our unified experience as integrated conscious physical existents.

Sartre's balanced holistic approach, then, does not, in my view, have to entail a disregard for discoveries in other academic fields, e.g. those of neurology in finding out more details of how the brain works or those of psychology in studying how thought processes work. But it does entail that these discoveries have to be seen as showing us some of the detail of how consciousness is possible, rather than debunking the evidence of our own conscious experience.

I have put a lot of stress on what I see as the balance in Sartre's position. Sartre sees the human being as being conscious as such but primarily in non-thetic mode and in the process of living as a bodily existent in the physical world. However, the question could then be asked: why, with all these caveats thrown into the balance, does Sartre identify consciousness with "freedom"? Sartre fully accepts that consciousness arises as an aspect of the biological human being in the physical world and that the world is such that we cannot always achieve what we want. Has he not, then, overstated his case by identifying consciousness with freedom?

I do not believe so. Not to be a thing engulfed in the natural world but to be a centre of experience of the world can, I believe, appropriately be described as a form of freedom. In being conscious, I am aware of myself experiencing the world in my own right. If we accept that experience as such then this - whatever the conditions that had to be in place for such experience to arise - is a break

in the normal causal chain of physical happenings. It is a freedom from being engulfed in the physical world as an anonymous thing. Such a basic freedom is the prerequisite for us to be able to give any meaning to the term in the first place or indeed give meaning to anything. Also, specific situations of empirical "freedom" or "non-freedom" can only have meaning on the supposition of this more basic freedom. E.g. it is only in relation to a conscious experiencing centre that oppression or freedom from oppression can have any meaning. Things simply "happen to" a determined physical object: the concepts of freedom or oppression simply do not apply to it.

If we accept the idea of the human being as an experiencing centre, a qualitatively different type of existent from objects in the natural world, then we cannot at the same time view the human being as emitting responses determined by psychological or social factors or factors of any other type. This would again be positing one happening causing another happening and no centre of experience consciously feeling, thinking and acting etc.

But perhaps I am being unfair here. I would concede that it is logically conceivable that we have the <u>experience</u> of our feelings, thoughts and actions etc. as ours but that this experience is giving us a false impression behind which the truth is that my thoughts, feelings and actions are the result of a determined psychological or sociological process. However, such a theory would be a very unwieldy one proposing that our thoughts, feelings and actions etc. are the results

of a deterministic process but also that for some strange reason we have a consciousness of them but one which gives us the illusory experience of being responsible for them.

This would be a very "uneconomic" theory leaving the "experience" piece of the puzzle in an ill-fitting position. In the experience of thinking or acting, I feel that it is me who is creatively engaging in the process. And I can very often feel trouble or anguish in deciding what to do. Even a deep emotional feeling is mine, something I do not deliberately set out like an intellectual proposition but something that comes from me and my deep concerns.

Even a "softer" determinist theory, then, allowing for consciousness as such but one which is deluded that it is creative, has the disadvantage of jarring with our experience and leaving the role of that experience unexplained. And despite it, we go on with the experience of actively living as creative rather than determined existents.

It would seem to me, then, that it is preferable to take, like Sartre, a holistic approach to the human being. This does not mean that psychology cannot uncover generalities about how humans behave or that sociology cannot investigate the structures of society under which human beings live. But it does mean that the relationship between the human being and psychological generalities or social structures is of a different mode from that of the kind of relationships to be found in the realm of the physical sciences.

So I believe that Sartre's notion of the original freedom of being a conscious existent rather than being a thing submerged in the world highlights an important, indeed the fundamental, aspect of human experience and provides the best theoretical way of dealing with it. This is a significant freedom. It is the freedom from being an automaton, the freedom of being a conscious existent who experiences the world and who in response forms its own desires, projects, feelings and so on. This is not total freedom to achieve whatever we want but it is the freedom without which we could not be meaningfully said to want anything. Without this freedom, our being blocked in our actions would be of the same order as one snooker ball being blocked in its path by another.

However, even if we accept the Sartrean scheme, it has to be pointed out that there are issues to be considered which could be said in a sense to limit the significance of the fundamental freedom Sartre attributes to us. We have seen that Sartre views the human being as conscious primarily in non-reflective mode. It is in this mode that the original choice is said to be made. We also saw earlier that in searching for the original choice, Sartre looks for the crucial event of infancy and the psychic crystallisation around that event. Sartre, then, does not see the human being as mechanistically caused to do things by outside events but he is accepting that one's "personality," if we can call it that, is not something we can control at will. It is a non-reflectively conscious formation of a profound project of one's life. But if this project is non-reflective

and if it begins in infancy, then this places our freedom of original choice in a context of particular limitations in the sense that we are saddled with a given "input" in relation to which to make a choice. At a tender age when we are not at the height of our rational powers, we find ourselves, without having had any choice in the matter, in the middle of a family which has its own particular characteristics and problems, and in the middle of a given social and historical context.

Let us take for example the case of a boy born into a problem family and who has suffered abuse from an early age. Coping with abuse is going to be a central part of that child's life and would obviously be something he would have to deal with in forming his original project. He did not choose to be born into those circumstances but they will remain with him forever. Even if he eventually gets out of the situation of abuse, learns to cope with his past and moves on to new projects, that unchosen situation is with him forever as part of where he comes from, something he has to deal with in one way or another.

As a further example, let us take the case of a woman slave in ancient Rome who is compelled to live a life of servitude to her noble master. She has few rights and opportunities, will never get an education and so on. She has to make her choices and conduct her projects within this restricted context.

These points do not in themselves, I believe, amount to a justifiable criticism of Sartre's approach, though he does, in my view, fail - at least within the pages of BN - to properly pursue the social dimension of humanity. Let us consider first why the evidence of particular constraining social circumstances does not of itself undermine Sartre's approach and we will then look at the further direction in which I believe Sartre would need to go in order to adequately cope with the social dimension.

Sartre, in my view, could fully accept our two examples without contradicting his position. He would quite readily accept that the abused child and the woman slave had lived through family and social circumstances which as a matter of empirical fact - and without them having had any choice in the matter - left them with a traumatic emotional situation to deal with and materially restricted their opportunities in the world.

Sartre can accept this without contradiction because, as I have pointed out, his is a balanced position. The freedom he speaks of is not that of some divine being which can create its own universe to its own specifications but that of an integrated conscious bodily existent who just happens to be born into the world with the circumstances prevailing at the time but who experiences the world rather than is determined by it. Facticity entails that we have to respond to the world we are in, not the world we would like to be in and the response we give - being that of an integrated conscious bodily existent who naturally operates primarily in a

spontaneous rather than a reflective manner - will not necessarily bring us happiness.

The importance of Sartre's balance becomes apparent when we look at our two examples. It is only on the assumption that the child and the woman slave are experiencing existents in their own right that we can feel scandalized by their plight. If the child and the woman are only complicated "things" then such feelings have no application.

Mindful of this, we could opt to simply use a different phraseology, rather than taking a Sartrean approach. We could say that the child and the woman are potentially useful parts of society and that their placings are inappropriate. Society could be viewed - as in some functionalist sociology - as a wider complicated "thing" and we could view the society which corrected such faults as being similar to those types of computerised machinery which monitor and correct their own faults.

However, we human beings do feel ourselves to be experiencing existents and we do spontaneously feel empathy with the oppressed person as an experiencing existent having his or her empirical freedom constrained. Alternative views, like the one I just outlined, clash with our experience and are thus "uneconomic." It is part of human experience that we feel ourselves to be experiencing existents and that we treat other human beings as being experiencing existents. It is only on the basis of that fundamental freedom of being an experiencing existent that the constraints of society have

any meaning. This is something which Karl Marx - one who certainly appreciated the constraints of society upon the individual - recognized early on when he stated in his Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts that man's creative nature or "species-being" was "alienated" by the drudgery of wage labour in industrial society.[191] It was only in the light of their creative species-being that Marx could identify social conditions that alienated human beings.

Identifying particular sets of materially constraining circumstances under which human beings live or have lived does not of itself, then, undermine Sartre's approach. However, consideration of the social dimension of humanity leads me to criticize Sartre not so much for what he has done but for what he has not done.

The examples I quoted of the abused child and the woman slave make us aware of the fact that we come to life in a world where other human beings have passed what we could call "public meanings" to us; ready-made meaningful structures such as our family, the political structures of the country in which we live, nationality, language and even mundane things like traffic regulations and buildings with pre-determined uses such as libraries. We touched on this issue earlier in this chapter when we heard Sartre say that these things are part of facticity and have to be transcended by us. Like the crag which is only known as such through the human being's attempt to climb it, language, for example, has to be used by him or her for his or her ends of expression.

However, the problem is that Sartre at this stage - at any rate in so far as what he has put down on paper in BN - does not offer any consideration of how it is that human beings can create public meanings and how they relate to the pre-existing public meanings they are born into. This is a more complex issue than simply transcending the given as in Sartre's example of the crag since we are talking of givens which are themselves human products.

For example, Sartre states that war is my war by my attitude towards it and that if I accept the call-up rather than resist, even if the cost would be death, then I take responsibility for that war.[192] Sartre, I believe, is correct in pointing out to us our experience as conscious human beings for whom things mean something and in relation to which we form our own ends. Without our being experiencing beings in this way, war would simply be the inconsequential destruction of some things by others. In fact, it would not even attain that description since the whole process would be engulfed in the undifferentiation of the in-itself.

Sartre is correct, then, to say that a war has to be known through my attitude towards it and ends in relation to it and that this gives me a personal responsibility. We could not therefore see the human being as a thing propelled along by "history" since this would leave us with a history engulfed in the undifferentiation of the in-itself or no history at all. At the same time, however, we could say to Sartre that we need also to learn how it is that human beings as a

collective can end up with a public meaning such as a war and how and to what extent they can use their freedom to effect change at that level. There is a gap in the BN coverage of human life in that we need also to study this social dimension of humanity which entails that human beings in their inter-relations create public meanings which then become given features of the background in which they live. This social aspect of the human being is of such major importance that, in our study of what the human being is, we cannot simply gloss over it by treating public meanings in the same way as Sartre views the crag.

In this light, we might want to re-examine some of the examples Sartre has used earlier such as that of the waiter who is in bad faith in trying to be a waiter. What if he personally detests the occupation of waiter but does the job and plays the part to the full because he is required to do so by his employer and needs the money to support himself and his family? It is still the waiter who gives life to his role and who makes the economic necessity such by his interest in supporting himself and his family but, at the same time, this type of situation alerts us to an issue not simply of one person taking up his or her own attitude to a given - since, unlike the crag, society and economics etc. are human products - but of how human beings in their interaction produce such public meanings which they then have to act in relation to.

A proper study of the human being, then, requires a more detailed consideration of the social dimension. At the same

time, the human being must not be erased from the equation by a deterministic view of how society affects us. We are thus pointed in the direction of maintaining but extending Sartre's holistic approach. This would involve retaining the idea of the human being as a free conscious bodily existent but trying to show how he or she remains so while operating in a social and historical context. This, in fact, is precisely what Sartre himself did in his later work, Search for a Method.[193] This extension of Sartre's thought will be examined in the third part of this thesis. But for the moment, I believe we can see the importance of what Sartre has done up to this point in drawing from experience to present a picture of what the human being in a basic sense is - a unified conscious bodily existent - to give us the foundation from which to be able to study the human being in a meaningful way.

At the close of this chapter, we have been looking at the question of other people and we earlier heard Sartre talk of a general "truth" about humanity. This raises the question of how an individual for-itself can recognize another human being as a for-itself like himself or herself rather than as a determined machine since, after all, I do not feel the other person's experiencing.

If Sartre were unable to tackle this question, then what I have viewed as the foundation he has laid for the meaningful study of the human being would crumble since Sartre or the user of his philosophy could never know whether it really applied to humanity in general or only to himself or herself.

It is to how Sartre deals with this question that we turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3: THE FOR-ITSELF AND OTHER PEOPLE

3.1 THE ISSUE OF OTHER PEOPLE

So far, I have been using Sartre's philosophy in an attempt to gain a picture of what the human being is which fits our experience and which is thus non-determinist. However, I could very well be asked the question, what do I mean by our experience? Anything I do or anything which happens to me is part of my experience - even my relations with "other people." Therefore, no matter how confident I am that I am a conscious bodily existent or for-itself, how can I be sure that the other people I come into contact with are likewise conscious? Perhaps they are determined in all they do, perhaps in their case the mind equals the physical central nervous system. What right do Sartre or the user of his philosophy have to generalize about "human experience"? If I cannot rise to this solipsistic challenge then the carpet is swept from under my feet in my enterprise of forming a non-determinist approach to the study of "the human being." Instead of "the human being" in general, I could end up in the frustrating position of having only myself to study.

Sartre does tackle this issue in his own distinctive way. He starts with the question of how one can be sure that other people are conscious like oneself and his answer leads him to another important facet of what the human being is. That is, he sees that the free conscious bodily human being or for-itself has another aspect of his or her self, that aspect which only other people can perceive. This is to say, in Sartre's terminology, that the for-itself has a "being-for-others." In consequence, the for-itself has to relate to

these other people who have that privileged view on itself. This relating to other people, then, is also part of this new facet of the human being which has to be studied.

In keeping with the notion of "being-for-others," it is for we others to judge how successful Sartre has been in dealing with the issue of other people. In this regard, Sartre has often been harshly judged. In the previous chapter, I remarked that Sartre had not sufficiently dealt with the issue of wider society, of how human beings in their inter-relations give rise to a wider society which then imposes human-made givens on the individual who then has to respond to them. (I shall further develop this point in this chapter.) I argued that Sartre had still given us a valuable insight into what the human being is and that this view of the human being could be preserved while extending outwards to take on board this issue of wider society. I looked forward to Sartre's later work, Search for a Method[1] (hereafter referred to as SM) - in which he adopts a Marxist and more socially concerned outlook - as providing this extension.

In her introduction to SM, Hazel Barnes notes that critics from a Marxist outlook derided the for-itself of BN as existing in splendid isolation. "The individual consciousness," in Sartre's system, they thought, "was splendidly independent and alone."[2] In Part 3, I attempt to show how in his later work Sartre preserves the outlook of freedom while extending his thought to take in the issue of wider society.

However, I would argue that we should not see BN itself as devoid of any social context. In BN, the human being or for-itself is not gloriously alone. True, the for-itself cannot get out of its own experiencing and it has to freely conduct its own acts. And in so far as this free for-itself relates to other people, Sartre sees the relation as one primarily of conflict.

But we must be careful here. Sartre's concept of conflict with others presupposes a fundamental type of connection with others. Sartre does something distinctive and useful in that he examines human experience and tries to trace the roots of our relating to other people back to the beginnings of how one comes to relate to another person as a conscious person like oneself in the first place. From this he then sees the human being as permanently having to deal with the fact of being related to other people whether he or she likes it or not. In some senses, then, Sartre's view in BN is in fact deeply social.

Sartre again takes a balanced approach in which he cannot accept any grandiose notion of a common consciousness encompassing a group of people - since at the end of the day I have access only to how I experience things - but in which he proceeds from the basis of our fundamental experience of other human beings as other conscious experiencing centres with their own view of us.

Let us examine these issues in more detail now beginning, as logic dictates, with the question of how one can be sure in the first place that another human being is conscious like oneself.

3.2 THE EXPERIENCE OF ENCOUNTERING OTHER PEOPLE

Descartes, it could be argued, does not treat this issue in any really fundamental way. His "cogito" gives him certainty only of his own existence as a thinking thing. The certainty of the existence of other people (along with that of the external world) is only guaranteed through the "sleight of hand" exercise by which Descartes "proves" the existence of a non-deceptive God.[3] Sartre, in contrast, tackles this question by initially looking at our everyday experiences of other people and then trying to regress to the fundamental type of experience which, if I can put it this way, starts one off on the track of treating other people as conscious like oneself.

Sartre starts off with the simple experience of watching a man passing by.[4] In everyday life when one sees such a passer-by one views him as "infinitely probable" to be a conscious person like oneself. That is, I spontaneously regard him as a conscious human being. There is always the theoretical possibility that if I get close to him I will discover that he is in fact a mechanical robot or a scarecrow on wheels but if I meet him and see that he is a man, I will treat him as a conscious person.

But what is the difference between viewing a human being as a conscious existent and viewing him or her in the same way as any other object? Sartre marks this out by using another example, that of observing another man in the public park through which I am strolling.[5] At first I saw the park, now I see another man in the park. These two objects, the park and the man, are not, as I experience the situation, of the same type. The park is a simple passive object seen by me but I view the man, on the other hand, as having his <u>own</u> view of the public park. He is not simply a passive object under my gaze. He looks at the park and the objects in it from his own vantage point. There is an appearance of the park to him which I do not control. I look at him looking at the park. Within this scene, the park in a sense "escapes" me in having this appearance to another. The world "drains away" from me. But it is an "internal leak" only, if I can call it that, since I am the overall observer of the man looking at the park. Or in Sartre's words:

> "it appears that the world has a kind of drain hole in the middle of its being and that it is perpetually flowing off through this hole."[6]

Sartre considers carefully this type of experience where one encounters another human being as an object of our perception and where one spontaneously regards him or her as a conscious existent like oneself. Sartre reasons that if one's experience of other human beings was confined to that of encountering an object then it would only be by conjecture that one proposed that he or she was a conscious existent like oneself. But this is not the case in our experience.

We spontaneously treat other people as other conscious existents rather than reflectively consider them so by conjecture. Therefore, Sartre reasons, there must be a more fundamental experience in which I encounter another human being as an object of my view but directly as the subject who views me as the object which is "infinitely probable" to be a conscious existent.

According to Sartre, we can readily identify from reflection on our everyday lives, a specific type of experience which gives one immediate certainty of the existence of another conscious existent. There are, he claims, "certain peculiar consciousnesses" which "bear indubitable witness to the cogito both of themselves and of the existence of the Other."[7]

The fundamental type of experience Sartre is referring to is that of what he dramatically terms "the look."[8] In this kind of experience, I am going about my business when I suddenly realize that I am being looked at by another person. Sartre takes the example of spying on someone through a keyhole.[9] Moved by jealousy, I am bent over the keyhole and am surreptitiously observing the scene. I am not in a reflective mode, I am simply getting on with viewing the scene behind the door. But suddenly I hear footsteps. Still in non-reflective mode, I immediately with horror and shame realize that someone is looking at me.

In this type of experience, the other person is not an object for me. Nor do I make a conjecture that he or she is

conscious like me. Still in my normal non-reflective mode, I spontaneously feel myself being looked at as an object by the other person. In Sartre's terminology, "I experience the distanceless presence of the Other to me."[10]

To convince us of this, Sartre asks us to consider that experience of shame when we are caught, as in the keyhole example, in a compromising position. I have been caught by surprise so I have had no time to ready myself. I simply suddenly realize that another person is looking at me. Sartre notes that:

> "Shame is an immediate shudder which runs through me from head to foot without any discursive preparation."[11]

Sartre points out that there are infinite varieties of the experience of the look. There does not even have to be a pair of eyes in my immediate vicinity for me to experience the look. When someone looks at me, his or her "look" goes in front of their eyes to me[12] in the sense that I do not specifically observe their eyes as objects. I am taken up in the experience of being looked at as an object. But even when I cannot see the organic eyes, I can still experience the look. Sartre gives the example of men crawling through the brush during a wartime attack who are attempting to avoid a "look" from a farmhouse outlined against the sky at the top of a hill.[13]

These experiences of the look which bear witness to the "cogito of the existence of the Other" are, for Sartre, what

explain "that unshakeable resistance which common sense has always opposed to the solipsistic argument."[14]

An appeal to experience, then, is Sartre's basic way of dealing with the issue of the existence of other people. How adequate is this approach? First of all, I believe Sartre has helped clarify the issue by regressing to the original type of experience which is the foundation of treating other people as conscious like oneself. His description of the feeling of shame before another as an immediate shudder running through me is one which we can readily recognize from our experience. Sartre is at least correct in adequately reporting that in human experience there are occasions when one feels oneself viewed by others and it does seem logical to say that it is on this foundation that one spontaneously regards other human beings as conscious like oneself.

However, I would have to conclude that ultimately Sartre's appeal to experience cannot provide a logical 100% "proof" that the other human beings with whom one deals are conscious like oneself. It is always a theoretical possibility that the other human being I encounter has an "automated" nature such that he or she <u>appears</u> to act like an experiencing centre but is in fact only emitting a set response in accordance with a deterministic causal chain and is in no way conscious at all. As I can never get out of my own "experiencing" and can never actually feel the other person's experiencing, there is no way I can ever "prove" that another person is conscious like myself. My treating another person spontaneously as a conscious existent could in a sense be

described as a spontaneous "conjecture in action." That is, my treating another person as a conscious existent entails, although as an integral aspect of my actions and not in reflective mode, a conjectural element. Dissolved in my actions is the judgement that the other person is a conscious existent like myself. And logically it is possible that this judgement is wrong.

However, Sartre himself states that a valid theory of the existence of "the Other," to use his general term, will not provide a "proof" but, rather, bring out our "pre-ontological comprehension" of the Other's existence which we have within our own experience,[15] as in the phenomenon of the look. As I interpret this, what Sartre is saying is that one can logically doubt that other people exist in the same conscious mode as oneself but that such a doubt is a purely academic one which one does not in one's practical experience remotely entertain. In the light of that experience, I would conclude that it is a more "economical" theory to accept that other people exist as conscious like oneself.

But Sartre also notes that there are in human experience incidents in which we realize that we have made a mistake about the presence of another conscious existent. "I can indeed," Sartre says:

> "believe that it is a man who is watching me in the half light and discover that it is a trunk of a tree which I took for a human being."[16]

Or, to take the keyhole example again, I may be peering through the keyhole, hear a noise which I take to be a

footstep and immediately feel the shudder of shame but then turn round and discover that I have made a mistake and no-one is there. It was a "false alarm."[17] Sartre asks whether or not this type of experience debunks the "pre-ontological comprehension" of the existence of other conscious existents he was describing.

I believe Sartre's answer here again provides some insightful reflections on human experience and also shows a useful social dimension. However, we also, in my view, have to be honest about the limits of such insights in that I do not believe Sartre can "prove" even that there is <u>any</u> other conscious existent.

Sartre's answer, basically, is that any experience of the look gives us the certainty, if not in every case of actually having been looked at (since, as we have seen, there are times when we are mistaken), but of at least the fact that some other consciousness or consciousnesses exist for whom I can be an object. What can be in doubt in any individual case, according to Sartre, is only whether or not a particular object is the occasion of my being looked at. If I make a mistake, as in the case of the false alarm at the keyhole, I am no less certain (than if I had discovered someone there) that I have an aspect of my existence as seen by others. Thus, even if I realize I am mistaken, I may still feel embarrassed and ashamed. As Sartre puts it:

> "The Other's existence is so far from being placed in doubt that this false alarm can very well result in making me give up my enterprise. If, on the other hand, I persevere in it, I shall feel my

> heart beat fast, and I shall detect the slightest noise, the slightest creaking of the stairs. Far from disappearing with my first alarm, the Other is present everywhere, below me, above me, in the neighbouring rooms, and I continue to feel profoundly my being-for-others. It is even possible that my shame may not disappear; it is my red face as I bend over the keyhole. I do not cease to <u>experience</u> my being-for-others..."[18]

If, then, on discovering a mistake and realizing that "the Other is absent"[19] or that no other conscious existent is there, this is an absence which can only be so on the prior ground of the ever possible presence to me (in the active verb sense of "presence" we saw earlier) of any and all other human beings. Thus Sartre declares that:

> "it is in relation to every living man that every human reality is present or absent on the ground of an original presence...Being-for-others is a constant fact of my human reality, and I grasp it with its factual necessity in every thought, however slight, which I form concerning myself."[20]

Sartre, I believe, is correctly reflecting human experience when he says that even when I mistake some simple object for another conscious existent, I am still certain of the fact of other people in general for whom I can be a seen object. The case of the person who realizes he or she was mistaken but who still has a red face as he looks through the keyhole is a rather telling example.

However, Sartre's answer here is still restricted to an appeal to experience. The fact that one feels that one constantly has an aspect of oneself as seen by or capable of being seen by another conscious existent in no way "proves"

that such another conscious existent exists. For Sartre, it is only because the Other-as-subject has looked at me as an object, and thus immediately given me certainty of another conscious existent, that I can treat other people spontaneously as other conscious existents. But it is logically possible that in every experience of the look, there is in fact no conscious other looking at me but a determined automaton simulating an experiencing centre. In such a scenario, even my general certainty of being looked at by others would be mistaken. The fact of my feeling my being-for-others can in no way prove that there is even one other conscious existent.

But again I would argue that the more economic theory is to accept - on the basis of my own experience of myself as a conscious existent and of encounters with other people I spontaneously regard as conscious like myself - that other human beings are indeed conscious like myself.

Sartre has introduced a useful social aspect to his thinking here in that he has drawn from our general certainty of the existence of others who can look at us the inference that each for-itself is socially situated in relation to all humanity. My cousin who is absent from me and is in Morocco is not thereby non-existent. His absence is a human relation based upon the fact that, despite the huge physical distance between us, I can be "present to" him, i.e. make him the object of my thoughts, or that he can be present to me in the same way. The distance between us, then, is an objective one in the world, although it depends on us for its relation to

us. The route between myself and Morocco thus serves to "situate" me in relation to my cousin. Sartre then adds that this can be generalized. I am not only related to individual people I know for;

> "I am situated also as a European in relation to Asiatics, or to Negroes, as an old man in relation to the young, as a judge in relation to delinquents, as a bourgeois in relation to workers etc." 21

I have described Sartre's notion of the human being as in this way connected to the rest of humanity as a useful social element of his thought at the stage of BN. In Chapter Two, I stated how I thought Sartre did not pursue the issue of wider society far enough. Aspects of common society such as language, nationality etc. were treated by him as givens to be transcended by the individual for-itself towards its own goals. He did not pursue the issue of how individual human beings in their complex inter-relations give rise to common social "meanings" which then become the context in which the individual for-itselfs live. He did not show enough appreciation of the great prior weight of social context on the individual.

In SM, Sartre does deal with how individuals are part of a wider society in which one's individual actions in conjunction with those of others contribute to make up a society not controlled by any one of the individuals. He deals with how any individual is a conscious existent living his or her situation but at the same time is living in the particular the wider social situation. Sartre's notion in BN of how the for-itself is situated in relation to all humanity

is far from this complex awareness of the social aspect of humanity but it does at least show that, even at the stage of BN, Sartre accepts that any individual is unavoidably connected to the rest of human society. This embryonic social context of BN makes all the more viable my approach of treating Sartre's later work as a more socially concerned extension and not a replacement of Sartre's earlier thought with which it can be integrated.

Indeed, one could argue that without some conception of human beings as conscious existents who can relate to each other, the concept of society implodes in on itself as an inert mass witnessed by no-one. Sartre's enterprise of reflecting on human experience and trying to reach the fundamentals of how we become aware of "other people" and come to relate to them is appropriate even from a context of a concern with wider society.

Let us return, then, to Sartre's regression to the fundamental experience of "the Other." I stated that Sartre views the experience of the look as making us aware of the distance-less presence of the Other. I also discussed how Sartre points out that the experience of the look makes one realize that one has an aspect of oneself as seen by other people or, in Sartre's terminology, a "being-for-others." Let us examine this being-for-others in a little more detail.

3.3 BEING *FOR* OTHER PEOPLE

In the phenomenon of the look, Sartre has told us, one experiences the immediate presence of another conscious

existent. Sartre identifies three "terms" of this relation. I experience myself as looked at by the other conscious existent.[22] This experiencing one's self as seen by another is, for Sartre, a distinct aspect of human experience introducing us to a new structure of our existence. When I was spying on someone through a keyhole, we saw earlier, I was concentrating on the task in hand of observing the scene. I was not reflecting on myself. But when someone looked at me, I immediately felt myself as looked at by another conscious existent. This entails, for Sartre, that, still in an unreflective mode, I become aware of my "self" as an object in the world seen by others.[23] I am immediately aware of that aspect of myself as seen by the other person. And I recognize in my shame or pride that that seen object is me. I am that "Ego" seen by the other person.[24]

In being seen in this way, I am totally alienated from myself and the world. In the example of observing another man in the public park, the world flowed away from me only into an "internal leak" since I was the overall observer of the man looking at the park. But in this case, the other person is looking at me as an object in the world as only he or she can see it from his or her perspective. My self and the world in this case are outside my field of control for they are my self and the world as seen by another. Here, then:

> "the flight is without limit; it is lost externally; the world flows out of the world and I flow outside myself."[25]

The fact of having an aspect of oneself beyond one's control as seen by other people is what Sartre terms our "being-for-

others." The nature of this "being" or aspect of myself is unpredictable. This is because it is other people, other free conscious existents, who determine it.[26] It is entirely in the hands of the other experiencing person how he or she will "take me." In this sense, I am "enslaved" by other people.[27] Yet I recognize that this being is me. I accept that how other people see me is the external aspect of myself.

From the perspective of the other person, I am this being as in an "in-itself" form. That is, I am viewed as a conscious existent or "transcendence" but unavoidably in object form since I am the object of the other consciousness. I am a transcendence which is transcended by another transcendence.[28] This is what Sartre terms our "original fall."[29] In having an aspect of myself seen in object form by others, I have fallen into an in-itself form of existence. As a for-itself I can never fully identify myself with anything. E.g. I cannot really grasp my "personality." I am an experiencing centre getting on with life. But other people can see me as having a nature.

This is another example of how the in-itself continually closes in on the for-itself. We saw in the last chapter how our actions in becoming past unalterable events become part of the in-itself. The for-itself becomes in-itself too in becoming viewed by others. But just as the for-itself leaves behind its past and continues to exist as for-itself, here too it is only for other people that I exist this way. I must continue to exist as for-itself.

In looking at me in object form, the other person also alienates me from my own possibilities. In going about my normal business, I am, without having to reflect on them, aware of the possible actions I can take in relation to the objects of the world. E.g. I am aware of the possibility of hiding in the dark corner I see. However, other people see me, together with the probable actions I could take, in object form. They can treat me as an object to be surpassed by their possible actions. E.g. another person with a flashlight could search me out or even light up the corner before I get there.[30] In my everyday unreflective mode, I am aware that other people can treat me as and my possible actions as an object which they can surpass towards their own intentions.

For Sartre, if it is the case that other people view me in object form, then the reverse also applies. When I observe other people, I observe them as objects. I still view them as conscious existents but in degraded form since I cannot experience their experiencing. When I see another person performing an action, it is the unified object of "a person acting in the world" that I see. But as distinct from the Behaviourist view, Sartre insists that there is a world of difference from the unavoidably objective perspective I have of other conscious existents and treating them as objects pure and simple. The Behaviourists, Sartre argues, forget that it is a <u>transcendence</u>-transcended we are dealing with.[31] Indeed, it is always possible that this other person who is

an object of my view will turn the tables on me and make me an object of his view.[32]

We have seen that Sartre places great importance on the human being's "being-for-others." We are unavoidably "for-others" and we are in this way connected to all humanity. However, there is a sense in which Sartre strictly limits the status of being-for-others.

First of all, Sartre stresses that "being-for-others" is not an ontological structure of the for-itself."[33] That is, it is not essential to being a conscious existent that there be other conscious existents. It would be logically conceivable that a for-itself could exist which had never encountered another like itself and thus had no conception of having an aspect of itself for others. Such a for-itself would not be the human being but it is conceivable. It just so happens as a matter of fact that the human being exists in a world where other human beings exist. Our fundamental connection to other people who can look at us is dependent on the contingent fact of the existence of other people.

Secondly, I negate the Other as that which is not me.[34] This creates problems for Sartre in that he has already stated that when the Other looks at me as a subject, I cannot see him as an object. I feel his or her distanceless presence to me. If I look at the Other, he or she becomes my object and is lost as subject. Sartre argues that I indirectly negate the Other looking at me.[35] I become aware of the Other through my sudden awareness of my self as looked

at by that Other. The Other negates that self as that which he or she is not but I too negate it. I negate it in viewing it as my outside, not the self I am for me. This negation can then motivate me to turn the tables on the Other and view him or her as an object.

Sartre also considers the question of why there are other people.[36] He has already said that it is a matter of contingent fact. But he now considers whether one can view oneself as united with other people in a grander totality comprising us all, as in the sense of the Hegelian Spirit.[37] Sartre, rightly in my view, does not allow for the completion of such a totality. He again inserts an "as if" clause. The existence of the for-itself, Sartre said earlier, arises "as if" in a failed attempt of the in-itself to found itself and reach the completeness of the in-itself-for-itself. Reflection takes place "as if" in a second failed attempt at the in-itself-for-itself. Sartre says that in the case of being-for-others, everything happens "as if" in a failed attempt of the totality of for-itself to reach in-itself-for-itself by being able to get hold of itself as an outside object, splitting itself even further than in reflection.[38] This "attempt" fails in that the other for-itself is precisely that - another separate for-itself whose view of me as an object is not the way I experience myself for myself. The Other's making an object of me, then, fails to deliver the totality of a for-itself founding its own being.

According to Sartre, as I and the Other both negate each other as not being each other, it simply is not possible for

us to get outside the totality of the for-itself - Other relation to test the idea that this relation is part of an overall directing Spirit.[39]

I believe Sartre is correct in this judgement. One can only feel one's own experiencing and another conscious existent can only feel his or her own experiencing. Neither of us can reach out to any "super-consciousness" comprising us both (a concept which in any case creates new difficulties).

3.4 RELATING TO OTHER PEOPLE

Sartre next attempts to study some of the fundamental ways human beings relate to each other on the basis of his insights into being-for-others. Sartre has viewed the human being as fundamentally desiring to be complete or to be "in-itself-for-itself," a state it is impossible to reach. For Sartre, the fact that other conscious existents have the objective, external view of oneself of which one is oneself incapable deeply affects the for-itself. The other conscious existent is in possession of that which, if I could get hold of it, would allow me to found myself or to be "in-itself-for-itself." The for-itself, in consequence, takes up various attitudes towards others[40] in which it attempts to relate to another person in such a way as to take control of his or her view of itself to allow it the completion it seeks. Needles to say, these attempts continually fail.

The various types of attitude towards the Other break down into two main types:[41] trying to use one's being an object in order to take control of his or her freedom, or turning

the tables on the other person and making him or her an object in an attempt to symbolically take hold of the other person's freedom through possessing him or her as an object. Each of these two attitudes fails and collapses into the other.

Sartre takes some fundamental attitudes in sexual relations between people as variations on these two types and as fundamental attitudes present in varied form in our "non-sexual" relations with others.[42] He regards love, desire and hate as the fundamental sexual attitudes[43] and he also studies various "off-shoots" from them, if I can call them that, such as masochism and sadism. I will concentrate on a brief look at the three fundamental attitudes of love, desire and hate.

Sartre sees these relations very much in terms of conflict but we must remember that this "conflict" is being used very much in a broad sense such that the very fact of people having views of each other necessarily as external objects is a type of conflict in that other people have control over an aspect of our lives. It is also a broad sense of conflict which can include even superficially harmless acts towards others or even acts of generosity. Even being generous to someone involves fixing that person as an object of one's consciousness and "using" him or her in one's goal of being generous to him or her.

The stress on conflict should not mean Sartre should be seen as some sort of misanthrope. On the contrary, if all our

relations with others involve an element of conflict, it could be regarded as taking full cognisance of one's responsibility to develop a full awareness of this and alertness to it. Sartre, here, in my view, is being "realistic," in the everyday sense of the word, rather than misanthropic. The value of Sartre's insights into the implicit conflict with others is readily seen if we translate it to the social plane. For example, throughout history, colonialists have seen themselves as "helping" the colonized by bringing them "civilization" and "true religion." Let us bear these points in mind, then, in looking at Sartre's discussions of love, desire and hate.

In love,[44] according to Sartre, I use my object-state for the other person to try and ensnare his or her freedom so that, in controlling this free person's view of me as an object, I am founding myself. I try to make myself the fascinating and seductive beloved object round which the other person will freely want to centre his or her life.

However, the project of love fails because in order to get the other to see me as a <u>beloved</u> object rather than merely fascinating, the other person has to want me to love him or her. Both parties, in being "beloved" objects, are thus saved from the full harshness of the other person's subjectivity. But this is an imperiled condition. At any time, either of the parties can revert to viewing the other as a simple, non-beloved object. And even if this does not happen, it only suffices for a third person to come along and look at us to transform us back into a simple object-state.

I have not succeeded through love in taking control of myself as seen by the Other.

In sexual desire,[45] according to Sartre, I attempt to take possession of the other person's body as an object with a vague sense that this object is conscious or, in Sartre's words, is "a living body with consciousness at the horizon."[46] I enjoy the other's body as pure flesh and thereby also enjoy my own body as pure flesh. However, desire fails in that my consciousness of my pleasure and my eventual reflective consciousness of it make me lose track of the goal of making the other flesh and thereby capturing his or her consciousness at the horizon.

Hate,[47] for Sartre, is the last desperate resort. As all relations have failed, I wish that the other person (and, symbolically, all other people) were dead. But this too is a failure for even once all others were dead, it would still be a fact that they had existed and affected me. I would still be "for-others," it would still occur to me what others would have thought of me. I would still be aware of my outside aspect.

Sartre does not, of course, advocate that we should wallow in despair or give up. Even a laisser-faire attitude towards others, he says, is an imposition of one's approach to others on them.[48] Sartre in a footnote mentions "the possibility of an ethics of deliverance and salvation" achievable "after a radical conversion."[49] He does not give us any more details of this possible deliverance but I believe we can identify

its basics by treating it in parallel to the kind of conversion we looked at in the previous chapter in relation to the for-itself's fundamental project of becoming in-itself-for-itself. This conversion entailed accepting one's failure to reach the in-itself-for-itself and valuing the freedom one retains through this failure.

Similarly, then, with regard to the present issue under consideration, one would accept that one can never reach the in-itself-for-itself through one's relations with other people. One would still pursue relations with other people but take responsibility for how one acts towards others and value the freedom that one maintains in not being swallowed up as founded by another conscious existent.

Sartre, I believe, is correct not to accept experiences of "being-with" other people[50] (as in Heidegger's example of the crew of a ship being with each other in a mute existence in common to the rhythm of the oars[51]) as contradicting his view of relations with others as conflict. Sartre's basic point here is, if I can put it this way, that there is no actual merging of the individual consciousnesses into one common experiencer. A group of people are either pursuing a common goal of action or are watching a common spectacle, as in the case of spectators at a theatrical performance. What is in common is the goal of action or the object of perception. I am still a separate individual consciousness. This can be made painfully clear to me on occasions when I attempt to speak for the whole group using the term "we." "We think

such and such," I say but am quickly told to "speak for yourself."

Once again, however, I would argue that Sartre's thought here suffers from his lack of a detailed concern with wider society. I have already stated that he does not consider how people in their inter-actions give rise to a wider society and culture which then imposes a context upon the individual. In consequence, Sartre does not consider either how or whether people can freely act to influence society whether as an individual or in combination with others.

I would still maintain, though, at the end of Part 1 of this thesis, that Sartre has provided us with the basis of a viable view of what the human being basically is, namely a free conscious bodily existent or for-itself who encounters other such existents and relates to them. Without such a basis, concern for society would be of no consequence since it would be an inert mass with no-one to witness it. I attempt in Part 3 to show how Sartre maintains this perspective while extending his thought further into the social dimension in his later work, SM.

Before this, however, I attempt in Part 2 to show, by a brief look at Sartre's work on the imagination and the emotions, how Sartre's basic approach of viewing the human being as a conscious bodily existent can be put to practical use in studying aspects of human life.

PART 2: THE FOR-ITSELF APPLIED

CHAPTER 4: SARTRE'S "PSYCHOLOGY OF THE IMAGINATION" AS AN APPLICATION OF THE BEING AND NOTHINGNESS APPROACH

What I have been attempting to show in Part 1 is that there is at least a case for not viewing the human being as a purely determined thing and that such a case can be set out without reverting to a "ghost in the machine" type position. I have tried to demonstrate how Sartre's approach in BN to the human being as a unified conscious bodily existent or for-itself allows us to do this.

So far, we have been looking at the human being in his or her entirety. In order to test the usefulness of Sartre's approach, it might be helpful to examine how it could be applied to a particular area of controversy regarding how the human being operates. Here we can turn to another of Sartre's works, The Psychology of Imagination[1] (hereafter referred to as PI).

PI was, of course, published before BN. However, PI was a stage in the development of the Sartrean approach to the human being which culminated in BN. Although he has not at this stage devised the term "for-itself" to describe the human being, Sartre makes ready use in PI of the concepts of "nothingness" and "negation" which are so prevalent in BN and he opens PI with a short declaration on "The Intentional Structure of the Image"[2] which could fit easily within the pages of BN. He emphasises that his approach entails, if I can put it this way, following the dynamics of consciousness rather than studying the human being statically from the outside and implying an "inertia or passivity of the mental

structures."[3] I believe, therefore, that it is a reasonable proposition - and hopefully a useful exercise - to study PI as a practical application of the BN approach to consciousness to a particular area, the imagination.

To help us assess how useful Sartre's approach is, we could also compare it with a piece of work on the same subject, the imagination, by a philosopher from a different tradition. Here Daniel C. Dennett has provided us with a tailor-made essay, Two Approaches to Mental Images, from his book, Brainstorms.[4] First of all, however, let us take a brief overview of what Sartre says in PI. I will then examine Dennett's essay, pointing out what I see as its deficiencies. I will then hopefully be in a position to take a more detailed look at Sartre's PI and show how his approach allows us to overcome such deficiencies.

In PI, Sartre centres his investigation around the problem of what the mental image is and how it is produced. This exploration of the mental image also leads him to look at its relationship to other forms of imagination (such as reading a novel and watching an impersonator at a music hall) and ultimately to examine the significance of the imagination for human consciousness as a whole. For the moment, let us concentrate on what Sartre says about the mental image.

Sartre starts from the basis of reflecting on the actual experience of producing mental images and trying to describe that experience. He then applies explanatory analysis to it but in such a way that the explanation is integrated with the

description rather than presenting us with a scenario in which our experience is branded as an illusion behind which lies the "real" scientific explanation. When I form a mental image - e.g. of an absent loved one - I do have the experience of mentally "viewing" that person. Sartre starts from this base of accepting the experience as such but allows for open examination of how it is accomplished.

Sartre concludes that there is not any actual physical or mystical picture which is "in" the head. The experience is nonetheless not to be denied. Drawing on the work of psychologists, Sartre's view is that the experience is accomplished by a synthesis of one's knowledge of the imagined object, the affective sense one has of it, the kinaesthetic movement by which one mimes it and one's acting towards all this as if it were the object present. For Sartre, then, the body is also part of the process. Sartre gives his own experience as an example; he was imagining a swing swinging and found that his eyes swung to and fro.[5] The body's movement is used in the synthesis of the image.

Sartre in this way openly uses analytic detective work but at the same time places his discoveries back within the unity of the experience of imagining rather than using them to debunk our experience. Whatever way we accomplish the experience, it "does the trick" and delivers to us an imaginary view of our intended object.

It is this attitude towards human experience which is central to Sartre's thought in both BN and PI. In BN, Sartre accepts

and tries to describe our experience as conscious existents. He realizes that we are embodied creatures who live in the world and he does not see any evidence for our being "inhabited" by some kind of spiritual entity or "soul." But neither does our existence as bodily beings in the world have to entail the debunking of our own awareness of ourselves as conscious existents or experiencing centres. It does not have to entail that consciousness is "in reality" simply a physical process of the body. Rather, our existence as bodily creatures in the world is the ground or condition on which we arise as conscious and our consciousness can be treated as such.

PI can serve as a practical application in a more specific area of this kind of approach. Sartre accepts and tries to describe our experience of reaching imaginary "views" of objects. He investigates how we accomplish this. He does not believe that in such experiences there is an actual picture in one's head. His findings are that we reach the imaginary view of an object through an encapsulating attitude in which one's knowledge and affective sense of the object together with mimicking movement are treated as if they were the object present. Sartre does not thereby mean that there is no such thing as a mental image or that it equals information stored in the brain plus physical movement. Rather, our treatment of our knowledge, affectivity and movement is the way we accomplish an imaginary view of objects and this type of viewing is a perfectly valid experience upon which we can reflect.

That, in summary, then, is how I see PI as a fruitful application to a specific problem of the kind of approach Sartre sets out in BN. Before examining PI in more detail, let us take a look at the problem from the rather different perspective of Dennett. This will help us in highlighting what it is in Sartre's approach that is distinctive and useful.

Dennett attempts to bring clarity to what he sees as a misconceived debate over the nature and even the existence of the mental image. He notes that there is a division between what he terms the "iconophobes" and the "iconophiles."[6] The iconophobes are sceptical that anything actually resembling an "image" is the cause of people's beliefs that they have "mental images." The iconophiles, on the other hand, insist that there are mental images as distinct effects of various causes (e.g. actual visual perceptions, the desire to solve a geometrical problem in one's head etc.) According to the iconophiles, mental images also have their own effects. Chief among these are the apprehension by the people concerned of those mental images and their consequent belief that they have them.

According to Dennett, this debate is a spurious one. The protagonists feel strongly about the issue because they too are part of the population who have the so-called "mental images." But for Dennett, this does not afford them any special privilege. His suggestion is that they would be better advised to keep their own counsel and wait for science to provide them with an objective answer. For although the

debate may look like a philosophical dispute, Dennett insists that:

> "It is not. It is merely embryonic-scientific. What is remarkable is that so many people find it so difficult to let this issue be what it should be: a scientific,empirical question, amenable to experimental probing. Why should anyone feel differently? Most of us laymen are quite content to be not only ignorant but opinionless about the normal causes of dandruff, inflation, earthquake and schizophrenia. We will let science tell us only if it will."[7]

Dennett attempts to dispel the misconceptions by setting out what, for him, are the only two possible viable approaches to the problem of mental images. These are the scientific approach[8] and his own version of a "phenomenological" approach.[9] These two, in his scheme, do not have to be in conflict.

The scientific approach defines "mental images" simply as the normal causes of people's beliefs about mental images and sets out on an objective investigation to find out the nature of these causes. Thus, the image-havers' statements that they have "mental images" are acceptable as data to be considered but nothing more. The scientist is quite prepared to discover that the cause of our belief in "mental images" is actually something unlike an "image."

The "phenomenological" approach, on the other hand, "suspends," if I can put it that way, the issue of the causes of belief in mental images. It concentrates on the logical construct or "world" created by the beliefs in mental images.

The phenomenological approach defines mental images simply as the intentional objects of our beliefs about mental images. "On this approach," Dennett says:

> "mental images are at least as real as Santa Claus. Just as one might set out to learn all there is to be learned about Santa Claus, the intentional object, so one might set out to learn all there is to be learned about those intentional objects, people's mental images."[10]

Dennett argues that the two approaches can complement each other rather than necessarily be in conflict. He makes the analogy of two sets of anthropologists studying the same tribe of forest-dwelling humans.[11] The phenomenological approach is analogous to that of the anthropologists who chart and describe the tribe's beliefs about their forest-god while not necessarily accepting that such a god actually exists. The scientific approach, on the other hand, is analogous to that of the anthropologists who search for the cause of the tribe's beliefs in the forest-god: the god's actual existence or the trickery of a shaman.

Dennett sees three possible conclusions that could be made about the mental image. He discounts the first one. This is to say that the mental image is "both incorrigibly known and causally efficacious."[12] This is similar to the idea on a wider level of saying that the human being is inhabited by a mysterious spiritual entity or soul. It is like the tribesman or woman saying that the forest-god exists in Heaven. It is to posit the existence of a "mental image heaven."[13] This is anathema to Dennett. He insists that:

> "if mental images turn out to be real, they can reside quite comfortably in the physical space in our brains, and if they turn out not to be real, they can reside, with Santa Claus, in the logical space of fiction."[14]

Dennett leaves it to science to find out which of the two remaining conclusions is the correct one. It may turn out that there are "information-carrying structures in the brain"[15] with such properties that would allow them to be appropriately described as "images" and that it is these structures that cause our belief in mental images. In that case, the scientific iconophile would be correct and he could confidently assert that:

> "imaging is, and has been like normal veridical perception: just as pigs cause one to see pigs ... images have caused him to believe he is having images."[16]

Alternatively, it might turn out that image-havers' beliefs are caused by structures in the brain lacking the characteristics that could appropriately be described as those of images. We would then have to conclude that the image-haver's beliefs in mental images are "illusory."[17] Dennett remains neutral and is content to wait for science to eventually confirm which of the two conclusions is correct.

Such, then, is Dennett's view of how we should approach the mental image. What is wrong with such a view? Where I believe it fails is in its attitude to human experience. It would be reasonable to say that people's reports that they have "mental images" should not be blithely accepted without question. But Dennett goes to the opposite extreme. He

looks at the human being from an almost totally external perspective.

He starts from the simple fact that people report having "mental images." However, he does not go very much further in actually exploring the mental images. That is, he does not try to describe the actual experience of having a mental image. I can just now produce a mental image of my own. I imagine the facade of my old school. That is an experience of mine in which I aimed at imaginatively viewing my old school. I knew I was not actually "seeing" the school as in a visual perception but I nonetheless gained what was for me an imaginary "view" of it.

Dennett isolates the mental image from that experiential context. He does not see the human being engaged in the activity of imagining but, instead, looks at the human being as an object reported to have images and then awaits a scientist to find out for him if there is anything in that being's brain corresponding to the reported images.

Of course, Dennett allows for his own form of "phenomenological" approach but this too suffers from his "externalist" attitude. It involves charting people's beliefs about mental images and he views this as analogous to charting people's beliefs about Santa Claus. His phenomenological approach targets people's beliefs about mental images because that is his device to get round the fact that his scientist has not yet found the corresponding brain structure. But a phenomenology should involve

something more immediate than that. It should reflect on and try to describe the features of the actual experience of having a "mental image."

If we attach significance to the fact that we human beings appear to ourselves to be "experiencing centres" rather than just like any other objects in the world, then we cannot study the human being in the same absolute terms in which we might study such objects. From this perspective, it unnecessarily jars with human experience in general to brand a particular area of that experience as illusory. This is what Dennett could be seen to be doing when he leaves open the possibility that science will discover that our beliefs about mental images are caused by a structure in the brain not appropriately describable as "imagistic." Such a "discovery" would totally jar with my own experience in which I aimed at an imaginary view of my old school and succeeded, whatever the conditions that allowed me to do so. If we treat the human being as an experiencing centre, then we enter a fluid and ambiguous area where the question to ask is not "Does such a thing as a mental image exist in the human being?" but, rather, "From reflection, how would we describe the experience of having a mental image and what can we learn about the nature of that experience and how it is accomplished?"

Such an approach has the advantage of "dovetailing" with our experience. It might uncover detailed information about the mental image not immediately apparent in the actual spontaneous "all at once" experience but it can then be

integrated with our experience as explaining how it is accomplished and how it is possible. This is the kind of approach I believe we can identify with that of Sartre in PI. Let us look at PI in a little more detail now, highlighting how Sartre avoids what I have tried to show are the deficiencies in Dennett's approach.

Sartre's essential starting point is to recognize that having a mental image is a human experience. Dennett simply notes that human beings report having "mental images." He concentrates on the notional image-thing and asks science to find out for him whether or not such a thing can be found in the brain. Sartre instead is concerned with the whole experience of having a mental image. He therefore makes what would seem a reasonable demand, namely that we should first of all reflect on and describe the experience of having an image.[18] This entails trying to convey what we do in the actual experience of imagining rather than simply dealing with the loose concepts we use in everyday language after the event.

According to Sartre, such reflection brings out two basic facts about the experience of the mental image. First of all, he says, when I produce a mental image, I am not concerned with the image as an image but at the object I aim at through it. E.g. if I produce a mental image of Peter, it is Peter who is the object of my consciousness. It takes a secondary act of reflection to concentrate on the image as an image.[19] What Sartre is getting at here is that producing a mental image is primarily someone's experience of imagining

something. If we may talk of having a mental image as a kind of imaginative mode of "thinking," we might understand this better. What Sartre is saying is that in the experience of imagining Peter, I am thinking of Peter, not thinking about a thought of Peter. It is implicit that everything is in the imaginary mode but the explicit object of my "thought" is Peter himself.

The second fact Sartre highlights is that having a mental image is a particular kind of experience with its own distinctive traits.[20] For example, I am able to report that I was "only imagining" Peter. Imagining, then, is not the same as perception. It is a different type of experience with its own characteristics.

I believe Sartre is correct in identifying these two points about the mental image. He is simply saying something that should not be controversial: namely, that having a mental image is a human experience of someone relating to an object in an "imaginary" way and that this type of experience has its own distinctive characteristics as compared with, for example, perception. This should be obvious. When I produce a mental image of, for example, an absent friend, the object of my concern is my friend and it is an intrinsic aspect of this experience that I know I am not getting an actual visual perception; my experience is of the distinct imaginative type.

These two basic facts arrived at by reflection are, for Sartre, the essence of what the experience of the mental

image is like.[21] According to Sartre, we are here working in the realm of "certainty."[22] That is, no matter what the conditions are which make experiencing an image possible, the two points are basic factual reports about what the experience of a mental image is like. They are the first certain facts we have to go on when we set out to investigate the mental image.

Sartre argues that the first task in this investigation should be to stay within the realm of certainty and reflect on and describe the experience of the image, expanding on the two basic points. Only after gaining this grounding should we try to hypothesize about the nature of the "mental image." Such hypotheses lie in the realm of the "probable,"[23] i.e. they can only ever be approximations at explaining how the complex "all at once" experience of mentally imagining something is accomplished.

Sartre's charge, however, is that many psychologists ignore reflection on the actual experience of the mental image but instead launch straight into explanatory scientific hypotheses. Without a grounding in experience, these hypotheses fall into error.

A common error Sartre identifies is what he terms the "illusion of immanence."[24] This illusion is to believe (1) that the image is <u>in</u> consciousness and (2) that the object of the image is <u>in</u> the image. That is, the illusion consists of ignoring the fact that the mental image never arises outwith the experiential context of someone imagining something and

so considering in isolation an image as some sort of independent thing or sensation.

It could be argued that Dennett suffers from a modern form of the illusion. He renders the human experience of mentally "viewing" things irrelevant and waits for science to confirm or deny the existence of an image-like brain structure.

Sartre instead proposes his own methodical approach. The first stage is to reflect on the experience of producing mental images. The second stage is to compare that experience with other types of imaginative experience. In the third stage, we are then able to formulate hypotheses about the nature of the mental image. Reflection and hypothesizing are here complementary. Reflective description tells us more precisely what the experience is that we are examining and the hypothesizing tries to explain how the experience is possible.

Sartre's first stage, I believe, is vital. In trying to describe the actual experience of the mental image, he helps clarify the issue. In everyday life, we talk loosely of the "mental image." Dennett treats this entirely literally and awaits a scientist to tell him whether or not such images or image-like brain structures exist. If they do, he has told us, then imaging is like perception and images cause one to believe one is having images. If not, then we are deluded. However, we have already seen from reflection that the mental image is a distinct experience not the same as perception. Reflection on the experience of the mental image, then, might

well show that the issue is more complex than confirming or denying the existence of "images" as some kind of "mini-perceptions."

In carrying out the first stage, Sartre identifies what for him are the four main characteristics of the experience of the mental image. Firstly, he says, the mental image is a "consciousness." That is, it is a form of awareness of an object and one is primarily concerned with that object rather than an image as such. When I perceive a chair, the object of my concern is the chair. If I imagine the same chair, the object of my concern is still the chair outside me, even although in that case I do not encounter it actually present. Or, if I imagine Peter, it is Peter I am directed towards rather than an image for its own sake. Sartre therefore defines the experience of the mental image as:

> "a certain manner in which the object makes its appearance to consciousness, or ... a certain way in which consciousness presents an object to itself."[25]

We must remember, here, that Sartre is reflecting on the whole experience of someone imagining something. He is not yet making any claims about how precisely the mental image is able to represent an object. He is simply saying that the experience of the mental image is one mode of being conscious of an object.

I believe Sartre is correct here. The image is first of all an experience for us. To say that the image is a consciousness is to record that the experience is <u>someone's</u>

experience of imagining something. That the "something" is not the image itself for its own sake is something we can readily attest to from reflection on our own experience; if the image itself were always the object, we could hardly even have the word "image" since it already conveys the idea of representing something.

The second characteristic of the mental image identified by Sartre is that it is subject to "the phenomenon of quasi-observation."[26] Sartre does seem to be accurately describing human experience here. What Sartre is basically saying - to put it in everyday language - is that when one has a mental image, it is by one's own mental creativity that one gets a "view" of the object. Because we are only mentally viewing the object, the "view" entirely depends on what I know about the object and my putting it into the view. This is a different - and poorer - type of "viewing" of an object than that of perception. When I actually see an object before me, in the case of visual perception, I look at it from ever new angles and can discover an infinity of details of it that do not depend on my creativity.[27] When I imagine an object, I cannot observe it in this full way. It is a case of only "quasi-observation."[28]

In setting out in detail what the phenomenon of quasi-observation is, Sartre compares the mental image with perception, as we have just looked at briefly, and also with the concept.

When I perceive an object, according to Sartre's reflection, I can only observe it from one particular point of view at a time and there is an infinite amount of points of view possible. With perception, we have to "make a tour"[29] of objects. Also,the perceived object is "brimming over"[30] with an endless amount of details I can discover.

When I form a concept of an object, by contrast, I do not have to tour round the object and view it from various angles. With the concept, I seize the object all at once, in its entirety.[31]

Sartre, then, makes a sharp contrast between, on one side, perception which entails encountering and viewing the object in all its detail and, on the other side, the concept which involves encapsulating the entirety of the object all at once by a thought without requiring to "view" it. Sartre holds that the mental image fits into neither type but is intermediate between the two. On the one hand, it seems akin to perception in that one gets a kind of "view" of the object. On the other hand, it is like conceptualization in that one does not have to tour the object; one immediately knows what it is. This is because as a <u>mental</u> image, the "view" of the object is one I construct with what I know of it. It does not offer the scope for endless discovery of further details of the object since I can only get out of the image what I have put in. In that sense, the mental image suffers from an "essential poverty"[32] in comparison to an actual perception of an object. The object is not present

before me in all its detail and with its connections to the rest of the world surrounding it.

Sartre holds that from this description we can see that the mental image involves a combination of knowledge of the particular object and details of it that one wants to "view," in that sense "constructing" the object, but at the same time still being primarily concerned with the object and the wish to view it rather than an image for its own sake. The object thus only "appears" to me through and at one and the same time as my effort of imagining.

Based on these points, Sartre gives a provisional definition of the mental image as:

> "a synthetic act which unites a concrete non-imagined knowledge to elements which are more actually representative."[33]

Again, though, Sartre has not yet reached the stage where he can hypothesize about the "representative elements."

The third characteristic identified by Sartre is that "the imaginative consciousness posits its object as nothingness."[34] Sartre is here referring to the fact that the different ways of being conscious of objects, such as perception or imagination, involve their own way of affirming the status of the object concerned and how one is related to it. This is what Sartre means by "positing." With perception, for example, one posits the object seen as existing. I believe it is actually present before me.

The mental image, according to Sartre, involves a very different type of positing action. I posit the object imagined as either non-existent, absent or existing elsewhere.[35] (Sartre also allows for a fourth category, a "neutralizing" positing act which applies to hallucinations, dreams and certain other types of imaginative consciousness). This is to say that when one produces a mental image one is well aware that the object is not actually truly present before one. In that sense, I negate the object or "posit it as nothingness." It is this difference in positing that makes the mental image distinct from perception.

Sartre puts forward two important points about how we posit the object as nothingness in the experience of the mental image. Firstly, the positing takes place within and as part of what makes up the experience of the mental image. Secondly, it takes place within the context of the desire to "make the object present in its nothingness," i.e. gain a "view" of it even though I know it is not there. We can draw all these points together and illustrate them by looking at Sartre's example of someone producing a mental image of a dead loved one. The heartache felt is precisely the consequence of the fact that the mental image presents its object as no longer existing.[36]

The fourth characteristic of the mental image Sartre identifies is "spontaneity."[37] Here Sartre again compares perception and imagination. He notes that in comparison to the imaginative consciousness, the perceptual consciousness "appears to itself" as passive.[38] This is not to say that

perception is an entirely passive "tabula rasa" type affair since Sartre later on discusses briefly the intentionality essential to perception. Sartre is simply referring to the fact that, as we experience it, perception involves a passive element in that we come across substantial objects "out there" which we did not will into existence.

The mental image, in contrast, does not involve such passivity. The imaginative consciousness entails instead a spontaneous creativity. When I produce a mental image, I am implicitly aware of myself as mentally creating a view of an object without believing that I have actually summoned it before me in reality.

This completes Sartre's initial phenomenological description of the mental image. From reflection, he has seen that the mental image is a way of being conscious of an object, that it provides a sort of "view" of the object, that this "view" incorporates the knowledge that the object is not actually present and that this viewing is a moment of mental creativity. Sartre has now exhausted his first reflective and descriptive stage. We still do not know at this stage how precisely the mental image delivers a "view" of an object. We do not yet know what the nature is of the "representative elements" that Sartre spoke of.

At this stage, though, Sartre still does not launch into forming hypotheses about how the mental image is accomplished. Sartre has so far only looked at one particular kind of imaginative experience, the mental image.

However, Sartre notes that there are other types of imaginative experience, such as photographs, caricature drawings, impersonations etc., which are similar to the experience of the mental image in that they involve using some kind of image - even though not of the mental type - to get a view of a certain absent object through that image. This also entails that, just as in the case of the mental image, the image is not considered for its own sake but only as helping us to reach out to the object we are concerned with. Sartre puts forward the reasonable proposition that before moving on to the stage of explanatory hypotheses, we should look at these other types of images and how they compare with the mental image.[39] This is another area overlooked by Dennett.

Sartre gives the example of wanting to recall the face of a friend, Peter. First, I produce a mental image of him but I find that it does not fully satisfy me. So next I look at a photograph of him. However, the photograph is a bit lifeless, I feel it misses Peter's character. I then look at a caricature drawing of him. This is a distorted line drawing exaggerating a few details of Peter. However, it delivers to me a characterful view of Peter. These three experiences, Sartre notes, have differences but all three nonetheless have the same aim of recalling the absent Peter's face. All three aim primarily at the object, Peter, and use some "material" - whatever its nature in whatever particular case - as an "analogue"[40] of or, if I can put it this way, a "stand-in" for, the object.

Sartre accepts that there are obvious differences. Photographs and drawings etc. exist as objects in their own right in the outside world. But the nature of the "material" used in the mental image is more difficult to know. Once I stop producing the mental image, there is no "residue" left to examine whereas the photograph and drawing still exist before me when I stop using them. Nevertheless, the three experiences involve the same process of an intention (the goal of viewing an absent object) "animating" some material to make it an analogue of the aimed at object. The three experiences have the same form but use different materials.[41]

In view of this basic similarity, Sartre links non-mental images with the mental variety as part of the same class or as members of the "image family."[42] Drawing all these points together, Sartre produces a definition of the image in general, i.e. mental or non-mental, as:

> "an act which aims at an absent or non-existent object as a body, by means of a physical or mental content which is present only as an 'analogical representative' of the object aimed at."[43]

Before moving on to hypotheses about how the mental image is accomplished, Sartre gives a phenomenological description of various members of the image family and compares them with the mental image. The instances of imaginative consciousness he selects are: looking at a photograph of someone, watching an impersonation at a music hall, looking at a schematic drawing, experiences such as "seeing" a face in a fire, having a hypnagogic image and, finally, the mental image

revisited. He starts off with instances where the material is heavily drawn from objects in the outside world that we can actually perceive, as in the case of the photograph, and progressively moves forward to cases where the material is poorer and less obvious until he returns to the mental image. This will give Sartre further information from experience to draw on when he moves on to attempting to formulate hypotheses about how we accomplish the production of mental images.

Sartre's procedure here in looking at these other types of imaginative consciousness is again indicative of his attitude to human experience. He does not look at the mental image in isolation. Rather, he looks at it as the experience of someone imagining something. He also looks at in relation to other types of imaginative experience and ultimately in relation to the question of the place of imagination in human life in general. This is a far broader-based procedure than Dennett's. Sartre too wants answers to the question of the nature of the mental image but not in a simplistic manner which will confirm or brand as illusion our experience of mental images. Sartre accepts that we have this experience of mentally "viewing" things and holds that the relevant question to ask is "How is it accomplished?" rather than "Is it illusory?" Part of the process of finding out how it is accomplished is to describe the experience and the similar experiences from the same family and use these descriptions to find relevant information to draw on when forming explanatory hypotheses. Since it is human experience we are dealing with here, it is also important to put the issue in

an even wider experiential context by looking at the significance of imagination to human life in general.

Sartre gives quite detailed descriptions of each of the types of imaginative consciousness he investigates. I will look at them briefly, focusing particularly on the aspects Sartre finds useful in coming later on to form an explanatory hypothesis about the mental image.

The first example Sartre considers is that of looking at a photographic portrait of, for example, one's friend Peter.[44] Sartre compares this with observing a sign inside a building for "The Assistant Manager's Office." In both cases, we look at some object through which we are directed towards something else, an absent object (Peter or the office). In this respect, observing a sign and looking at a photographic portrait are similar.

However, there is an important difference. The photograph resembles the object whereas the sign is merely an arrangement of strokes which by convention only has the meaning "office." The photograph, in contrast, has been deliberately produced to look like the object it points to, Peter. Similarly to what happens with the sign, I see it and grasp the meaning intended. But unlike the case of the sign, we go further than just grasping a meaning. We realize who the photograph depicts and we treat it as if it is Peter even though we know he is not here.

In the case of the photograph, then, I have a knowledge of Peter - in recognizing who the photograph depicts - and I take an attitude of treating that knowledge of Peter as if it were him before me, even though I know he is not here.

Sartre takes as his next example a performer in a music hall doing an impersonation of Maurice Chevalier.[45] Here, the spectator has a double task to perform. He or she has to work out who the impersonator is impersonating by working it out from the signs used by the impersonator to show who is being impersonated (e.g. wearing a straw hat to signify Maurice Chevalier). The spectator also has to take the impersonator <u>as</u> Maurice Chevalier. Watching the impersonator is treated as a way of viewing the absent Maurice Chevalier. The spectator accomplishes both parts of the task at the same time. That is, he or she immediately treats the impersonator as a representative of Maurice Chevalier at the moment of recognition. Thus he or she is likely to exclaim: "It's Maurice Chevalier!"

In this example, the material is poorer, for the impersonator is not an exact likeness of Maurice Chevalier but merely imitates him with signs like the straw hat and exaggerated gestures. The spectator has to make do with these and treat the rest of the details of the impersonator's body vaguely as representative of Maurice Chevalier's body. However, for Sartre, this would not be enough in itself to give us a "view" of Maurice Chevalier. It is affectivity, for Sartre, that fills the gap. The impersonator succeeds in getting us to recapture the "feel" we have for Maurice Chevalier or the

affective sense we have of him. We rediscover his "expressive nature."

In the case of watching an impersonation, then, two important factors are used: knowledge (of what Maurice Chevalier is like and that the impersonator's signs refer to him) and affectivity (in recapturing the "feel" of Maurice Chevalier). Sartre will later on be able to examine whether or not they play a role in the mental image.

Next Sartre looks at a case where the material is even less direct: schematic drawings.[46] He gives the example of a group of simple lines which at first sight seem to be only lines but in which, if I look at them in different ways, I can see a face. These kinds of drawings are often used in the field of psychology.

When looking at these drawings, according to Sartre's description, we use our eyes to enact "symbolic movements" upon the lines in order to find out how they are to be interpreted. Our eyes play up and down the lines in a "symbolic pantomime" trying to find some object we know is supposed to be represented by them. At the very same moment that we arrive at the correct interpretation, that the lines represent a face, we see the face, we view the lines as an image of the face.

In this kind of imaginative experience, then, knowledge and movements are the two elements involved. Sartre is using "knowledge" in a broad sense. One is directed or intended

towards the lines, looking for an object represented there, spontaneously drawing on our experience or "life-knowledge," if I can put it that way, in the search. Our knowledge is incorporated in the movements up and down the lines as we search for the object. We eventually reach the specific knowledge that the lines represent a face and the "knowledgeable movements," if I can describe them that way, remain in place to maintain the imaginary view of the face. Sartre has now discovered three factors - knowledge, affectivity and movements - which he can examine again later to see if they play a role in the mental image.

Sartre next looks at a type of imaginative experience in which the perceptual element of the material is even less than in the case of the schematic drawing. This is the kind of experience in which one imagines seeing objects, such as faces, in the flames of a fire, on wallpaper patterns etc.[47]

This type of imaginative activity is similar to that of looking at a schematic drawing, only this time an even stronger imaginative effort is required. The schematic drawing has at least been designed to represent something, even though one has to "work it out." The spot on the table-cloth, however, to take Sartre's example, is simply a spot and has not been designed to represent the face I see there. Knowledge and symbolic movement is again being used here. Sartre describes the image here as an image "in the air." I previously saw the spot as simply a spot, the perception of the spot is not much of a material to use as an image. But I

use it anyway to allow me to pretend to see the face in a specific locality.

Sartre's final example before returning to the mental image is the phenomenon of "hypnagogic images,"[48] those vivid images people sometimes experience while in the process of falling asleep. From Sartre's description, this case is similar to that of seeing a face in the flames of a fire and such like, only this time it is even more extreme. One forms the image after trying to follow the entoptic spots on the eyeballs whilst one's eyes are closed and one is in the process of falling asleep. Again, the phenomenon of quasi-observation applies. The images seem vivid and fantastic but they depend on what I put in and they are not the same as perception. Sartre cites an example of a subject of a psychological study who reported that he had a vivid hypnagogic image of a parasol. During the image, he was "seeing" the parasol from one side. Nevertheless, he could "see" a rib of the parasol's other side which ought to have been hidden if this was a case of perception following the normal laws of perspective.

Before going on to discuss the mental image again, Sartre reviews the ground he has covered so far in surveying the "image family" from the photographic portrait to the hypnagogic image. Sartre says that in all these cases there is a material which is not a perfect analogue of the object to be reached. One uses one's knowledge to act on it, "to fill in the gaps," so as to turn it into the representation of an absent or non-existent object. Sartre looks on the

succession of cases he has examined as an evolution of imaginative consciousness in its material and knowledge in moving progressively from a case where the material is heavily drawn from perception (such as the case of the photograph) to cases where the material is meagre and the knowledge has to do more "filling in" (such as the case of the hypnagogic image in which the material is mere entoptic spots).

In the last section of his survey of the image family, Sartre finally returns to the mental image. Gathering together what he has learned from phenomenological description of the mental image and its family, he defines the image as:

> "an act that is directed towards an absent or non-existent object, as if it were an actual body, by means of a physical or mental content but which appears only through an 'analogical representative' of the pursued object."[49]

By "content" Sartre means simply an object one is conscious of, whatever its nature, which one uses to represent some other object. In the cases we just looked at we can at least <u>see</u> the physical object (such as the photograph, caricature drawing or blot) which we have used as a representative. In the case of the mental image, the "<u>mental</u> content" is more difficult to fathom. By saying that there is a mental content, Sartre is not descending to "the illusion of immanence" he previously condemned or saying that the mental image is some kind of mini-sensation in the head. Sartre is simply recognizing that when one produces a mental image of some object, one knows that the object is absent yet one does

not simply have a concept of that object but a sort of "view" of it. One knows that one is not actually perceiving the object and that the object is absent yet one feels one is getting a kind of view of it. One is therefore aware of something, whatever its nature, that one is treating as a view of the object aimed at. The "something," then, only needs to fit the requirement that it be something one can be conscious of. It does not have to be - and could not be, given the mental image's distinctiveness from perception - some kind of substantial "mini-thing" which is "in one's head."

The difficulty for Sartre is that one cannot readily get a hold of the content or analogue used in the mental image. Unlike what happens in the case of looking at a photograph, the analogue only lasts as long as the experience of the mental image and ends when the latter ends. Also, we are dealing with a spontaneous integrated experience in which I do not pay attention to the analogue for its own sake but only as a way of viewing the object I am concerned with.

It is at this stage that Sartre moves from the realm of the certain to the realm of the probable in an attempt to find an explanatory hypothesis about the nature of the mental image. Here Sartre freely draws on findings in psychology to draw up a hypothesis. However, the important thing is that Sartre's hypothesizing takes place within a wider phenomenological framework in which he accepts that we have the experience of mentally "viewing" things and in which he therefore attempts to find a hypothesis to explain how the experience is

accomplished rather than to explain what "really lies behind it" or to explain it away and brand it as illusory. In forming a hypothesis, Sartre also draws on the elements he found in looking at the image family. Sartre's hypothesizing, then, takes place on the ground of his study of the experience of imagining.

Sartre's hypothesis is that the mental image is a synthesis of knowledge, affectivity and movement. That is, the mental image is an integrated experience in which I am intended or directed towards a particular object or, to put it another way, I have knowledge of an object and I take the attitude towards that object of wanting to view it. This is a knowledge, then, which has dropped down to a "debased" level in looking for a view of its object. Allied to this knowledge within the integrated experience is the affective sense one has of the object, allowing one to feel as if one is reaching the essence of the object. Accompanying all this, are subtle spontaneous bodily movements by which one "mimes" the object, giving one the feeling of having the object present before one. I treat all this as if it were the object present before me while at the very same time I know full well that the object is absent from me. In this way, one achieves an "imaginary view" of the object.

Sartre denies that there is any actual picture "in the head" but he is not thereby denying the experience of the mental image. As Sartre has shown, when one has a mental image one knows the object is not actually before one and one readily distinguishes the mental image from actual perception so, in

that sense, one could say that the issue, when we reflect on the actual experience, never was a crude and simple matter of finding or not finding a "mini-picture" in the head. The experience of the mental image is a complex one in which, by a spontaneous integrated procedure, one gives oneself a sort of "view" of an object, the imaginary view. It is no use to complain that to feel one is getting a view of an object while knowing that one is not really seeing it is a contradiction. The human being intentionally uses a contradictory mixture, holding it in place at the time to get the "view" he or she desires.

Let us now take a brief look at each of the three aspects of the contradictory mixture Sartre has identified. Sartre deals with knowledge first.[50] The "knowledge" involved here is at the basic level of knowledge of the object one is concerned about and what it is like. If I am imagining Peter, for example, I am intended or directed towards him, he is the object of my concern. But my mental image is of Peter the tall blond person. My intention, then, is not towards Peter in the abstract but as the person I know with his particular features. My intention is "charged" with knowledge. My mental image, then, is defined by the intention (I am concerned with Peter) which is in turn defined by my knowledge (of the characteristics of Peter).

The next important point for Sartre is to look at the attitude I take during this knowledgeable direction towards Peter. I have the attitude of wanting to view him. Sartre likens the attitude one takes when having a mental image to

that involved when one is reading a novel.[51] When reading a novel, I take the words as presenting the world of the novel before me, (without even having to produce a mental image of whatever moment I am reading about). E.g. if I read that the characters in the novel entered a particular room, then I treat the next events and dialogues etc. as happening in that room. When reading a novel, then, I am in the attitude of taking the objects depicted (people, things etc.) as present before me. For Sartre, the mental image involves a similar sort of attitude. Even though I know the imagined object is not actually present, I put myself into the attitude of encountering it as an object before me, I want to view it.

Sartre next looks at affectivity.[52] According to Sartre, the human being gives an "affective reaction" to the objects he or she comes across in perception. That is, we have our own "feel" for the objects around us, their "affective sense." We can even relate to an object in a purely affective way. E.g. those instances when we feel the desire for something but cannot think what it is.[53] On such occasions, one is conscious of the object aimed at only in its affective sense. In the experience of the mental image, one has this affective sense of the object together with the specific knowledge of what the object is and what features it has and also the desire to view the object. This affective knowledge of the object allows us to feel we have reached the "expressive nature" of the object. It provides one with the feel of the uniqueness and detail of the object in the absence of an actual perception of it.

The third and final main element Sartre identifies is movement or, more precisely, kinaesthetic sensations (the sensations produced from our movements from the skin, muscles, tendons etc.)[54] Sartre draws on psychological studies which show that subjects trying to remember the features of an object such as a picture of a tangle of lines use eye movements to try and remember. These eye movements are accompanied by kinaesthetic sensations. According to Sartre, when one produces a mental image one re-enacts these movements and sensations as part of the integrated experience. Because such movement is something actually taking place in the outside world, it has the role of allowing us to feel that the object is present before us to be viewed. Sartre gives an example from his own experience: he was imagining a swing swinging and found that he could not stop his eyes moving to and fro without ending the image.[55]

Sartre stresses that he has only given us a "probable dismemberment."[56] That is, the mental image is a complex integrated experience and we can only give an approximation of disentangling the various aspects involved. The mental image is a contradiction in that we talk of "seeing" and "hearing" our images even though we are not actually perceiving anything. But the contradiction is basic to the very nature of the experience. The belief in the view of the imagined object or the attitude of putting oneself before objects is essential. We nonetheless are perfectly aware that we are not really perceiving. This is evident in the strange ways the object can appear. E.g. I might imagine seeing a thimble but see it from both the inside and the

outside of it, something that would be impossible in actual perception.[57] Or I might imagine the Pantheon but be unable to count its columns from the image.[58] But these contradictions are accepted within the overriding attitude of seeking a view of the object.

It could be argued that Sartre's method has in this way shown itself to be more useful, in a very practical sense, than that of Dennett. Sartre has examined and described the experience of having mental images and similar experiences of the same category and then, drawing on the information gleaned from these descriptions, he has come to a hypothesis about how the experience of the mental image is accomplished. Sartre does not take up a "mental image heaven" type of position which Dennett rightly brands as unscientific and as offering no plausible way forward. However, it could be argued that Sartre avoids what could be seen as Dennett's own mistake in misapplying scientific method in treating the human being in an inappropriate way as the same type of object as any other in the natural world. Sartre, it could be argued, is being more "scientific" in bearing in mind the evidence of human experience that we are not objects like any other but are "experiencing centres."

If we accept that point, then we do not go looking to confirm whether or not there is or is not an "image brain structure" and from this decide whether or not our experience of mental images is illusory. We accept that we humans have the experience of giving ourselves an "imaginary view" of objects. I can just now imagine my old school, to go back to

my earlier example. However I accomplish that experience, it patently is not an illusion. I carried out that act of imagination, I recall doing it and no "scientific explanation" can tell me that I did not really imagine the school. What can be done is to investigate the details of how the experience is accomplished, as Sartre has done. Sartre has attempted to tease out the various elements involved in producing a mental image. Natural science could push this further in looking at how the brain works but such investigation is part of the process of showing how human consciousness is possible rather than explaining it away.

Sartre studies the human being in general in BN with the same type of approach. In BN he does not claim that there is a "ghost" inhabiting the human body but describes the human experience of being a conscious bodily existent who "lives" or "exists" the body. Sartre's PI could be seen, therefore, as a concrete application of the BN type of view of the human being to a specific area of human life, the imagination. In showing how knowledge, affectivity, and movement come together in the mental image, Sartre's PI gives us a specific detailed example of how the integrated conscious bodily existent or "for-itself" of BN operates. Sartre's PI, then, can be seen as a specific example of the fruitfulness of Sartre's approach to the human being as more generally set out in BN.

I mentioned earlier that, since Sartre studies the mental image within its experiential context, he goes further than Dennett in that, having described the mental image and

reached a hypothesis about how it is accomplished, he then broadens the question out to look at the place of imagination in human life. Before the close of this chapter, then, let us look briefly at what Sartre says here.

There are two main areas here. First, Sartre notes that mental images are used in the thought process even to the extent of producing imaginary "symbolic schemata" in the effort of understanding abstract concepts.[59] Sartre asks why we turn to mental images. The second area is a far wider one in which Sartre asks whether or not imagination is essential to human consciousness and investigates what can be said about human consciousness from the fact that it has the capacity for imagination.

To take the first issue, Sartre immediately highlights the "symbolic function" of the mental image.[60] He has already described how the mental image gives us a "view" of our intended object. The mental image, in this sense, symbolizes our intended object. Sartre argues that we turn to the mental image because of a basic desire to get a view or "intuition" of what we are thinking about. The abstract has to have some basis in the concrete otherwise it disappears as an absolute emptiness. Using mental images, including symbolic schemata, can be more primitive stages in the thought process leading up to the grasping of an abstract concept.

Sartre's position here fits in with his position in BN that consciousness has to be consciousness of something and that

we cannot conceive how a pure consciousness on its own could have anything to be conscious of. Consciousness cannot be such except as that of the integrated conscious bodily for-itself relating to the in-itself. The latter, through this relation, becomes the world but at the same time contingently exists irrespective of our existence and beyond our ability to control it by fiat of our wills. PI gives us a concrete example of how this situation is manifested in human life. Our object is not here but we are not content with the pure thought of the object. Even though we know the object is absent, we still strive to get a grasp of it concretely before us, even if only in the imaginary.

Sartre discusses the second, wider area in the conclusion of PI. I described Sartre's position as looking at the mental image within its experiential context. Sartre broadens this out by looking at the mental image in relation to the human experience in general of being a conscious existent. He wants to investigate what we can say about the nature of consciousness from the fact that it imagines.

Sartre asks whether imagination is a "contingent" specification of consciousness or a "constitutive structure" of it.[61] In other words, he is asking whether imagination is just an ancillary ability of consciousness or, on the contrary, an essential aspect of consciousness without which the latter would not be possible. By looking at the implications of the act of imagination, Sartre hopes to supply us with the answer.

Sartre first of all states that consciousness is "constitutive of a world."[62] Sartre obviously does not mean "constitutive" in the sense in which Berkeley's God is constitutive of a world by means of ideas alone. For Sartre goes on to say that the fact that consciousness is constitutive of this particular world with its earth, animals, its people and their story is contingent.[63] That it is this kind of world that we end up with is a contingent fact. This view here is totally in line with the BN position that the for-itself makes the in-itself a world while at the same time the in-itself exists contingently and independently of us and thus entails that the world has a "co-efficient of adversity" such that it can "resist" our wishes.

Sartre next looks at how we "constitute" the world in the concrete example of a particular moment of perception. Sartre compares a perceptual act with that with an imaginative act. When I perceive an object, I may not actually be able to see it in its entirety. I nevertheless grasp the object as that object without having to imagine the hidden parts or even specifically think of them. Sartre gives the example of seeing patterns on a rug.[64] Parts of some of them are hidden under the legs of an armchair. But I do not imagine the hidden parts or feel that they are absent. I simply "know" within the perception that the patterns continue under the chair. I do not imagine the hidden parts or concentrate on them. I perceive whole real patterns. Sartre draws from this the conclusion that whatever I perceive, I do so on the basis of reality as a whole without having to specifically attend to that whole reality for its

own sake. The conscious human being, in a moment of perception, then, "constitutes the world" in that he or she treats the world as that whole reality which is the ground upon which is highlighted the particular object he or she is focusing on.

Sartre now looks at the imaginative act. E.g. I could form a mental image of the hidden patterns under the chair. For Sartre, this is a reversal of what happened in the perception of the patterns on the rug. During the perception, the hidden patterns were part of the reality as a whole on which my perception was grounded but which was not specifically attended to. But now when I imagine the hidden patterns, I isolate them, detaching them from reality as a whole to present them to myself in the imaginary way. I constitute the hidden patterns as an image. I know the hidden patterns are not actually visible but I "view" them in the imaginary way or, in Sartre's terminology, present them to myself in their absence or nothingness. From this, Sartre describes the imaginative act as "at once constitutive, isolating and annihilating."[65]

From all this, Sartre draws out what he believes to be the two main conditions which consciousness must meet if it is to be able to imagine. Firstly, "it must be able posit the world in its synthetic totality" and secondly:

> "it must be able to posit the imagined object as being out of reach of this synthetic totality, that is posit the world as a nothingness in relation to the image."[66]

In simpler language, I have to grasp the world as the overall situation in which I live and which specifically is the situation in which I cannot have the object I imagine present before me in actuality. This is in fact a double negation: the world or my present situation lacks the presence of the object I aim at and the object I imagine lacks actual presence in the world before me. Sartre describes this as both a nothingness of the imagined object in relation to the world and a nothingness of the world in relation to the imagined object.[67]

Putting it in more general terms, Sartre is saying that to imagine, we must be able to constitute the world as a whole and negate it. For Sartre, this constitution and negation of the world is something that we do continuously in everyday life. It would be involved in, for example, perceiving an object, engaging in an action, or even affective situations such as missing a dead person.[68] All these examples involve looking at the world from a particular perspective by which one makes it a whole and by which one negates it at the same time. I see a particular object, thus taking the world as the unified ground on which the object appears. For Sartre, there is a fundamental negation here in that merely by taking the world as a whole, one sets oneself up as "free" from it.[69] This is in the BN sense of maintaining oneself as a conscious existent by being conscious of the world as not me. (In BN terms it would also, of course, involve negation in looking at the world as the ground for seeing this object rather than another.) Engaging in an action involves seeing the world as a whole or situation lacking something which I

intend to rectify by my action. Missing a dead person means seeing the world as an emptiness in the light of the fact that one's friend is dead.[70]

Sartre concludes from this that the conditions for being able to imagine are the same as for being a conscious existent or experiencing centre in general. For Sartre, then, the ability to imagine is an essential one to consciousness. If consciousness were "in-the-midst-of-the-world"[71] or a determined causal process like any other, it would be engulfed in the material world and would be unable to step back from it and negate it as a whole from a perspective. It would therefore not be able to imagine, nor could it meaningfully perceive, act or in any way rise out of the anonymity of, to use the BN term, the in-itself. It would not then even be consciousness. Sartre thus denotes the human being as a "being-in-the-world"[72] rather than "in-the-midst-of-the-world" like the mute objects outside us. (Sartre borrows these terms from Heidegger, though, of course, he puts his own slant on them).

For Sartre, then, the conditions which make imagination possible are the same ones that allow human consciousness to exist. Because of this, our everyday activities before real objects in the real world can easily, and often do, lead to mental images. As Sartre puts it, every concrete situation of the human being is "pregnant with imagination."[73] The mental image is an explicit manifestation of our constitution and negation of the world.

Up to this point, Sartre's position seems totally compatible with his view of the conscious human being and the world as set out in BN, only here focusing on the specific example of imagination. However, in PI, Sartre pushes further forward his view that the mental image is the manifestation of the negating power of consciousness. He argues that the negating function "can manifest itself only in an imaginative act."[74] From what we have just seen about negation in everyday activities, Sartre obviously does not mean that only a mental image involves negation whereas action, perception or anything else does not. What he is doing is to label our non-imaginative activities as implicitly imaginative in so far as they involve negating the world in identifying a lack to be plugged. Whenever the conscious human being is involved in a situation in the "real," i.e. non-imagined, world, there is, according to Sartre's formulation, an implicit reference to a corresponding imaginary element (the lack to be filled). Or in Sartre's words:

> "the realizing consciousness always includes a retreat towards a particular imaginative consciousness which is like the reverse of the situation and in relation to which the situation is defined."[75]

The imaginary, Sartre says, is the implicit meaning of the real.[76]

I find Sartre's position here unsatisfactory. Earlier in PI, as we have seen, Sartre rigorously distinguished perception and other activities in the "real" world from the separate "unreal" world of the imaginary. Sartre is now blurring this distinction by talking of a hidden retreat to the imaginary

involved in our activities in the real world.[77] We could point to some justification of Sartre's position here. For example, when one engages in an action - e.g. building a fence - one is thinking of an as yet non-existent object which one wishes to bring into existence. One could call this non-existent fence an "imaginary" one and, before carrying out the task, one could make the negation explicitly manifest by producing a mental image of the future fence. However, acting in the real world with a goal in mind is quite distinct in our experience from producing mental images. When I act to achieve something, I perform the task in the real world with the attitude that I have a specific concrete goal which I fully expect to achieve in the world. In the light of this, it does not seem appropriate to describe the goal as part of the "imaginary" and as something we "retreat" to. The goal, rather, is an integral aspect of what we experience as concrete acts in the real world.

Sartre, I believe, rectifies this fault in BN. As we looked at earlier, in BN, Sartre studies action and how this involves projecting a non-existent state of affairs that one intends to bring into existence. Sartre does not in BN identify such lacks as imaginary but, as we saw earlier, gives them a new term, "negatites" (literally "negatities"). This, I would argue, is more appropriate and preserves the distinction between the attitude of imagination and that involved in attending to the real world.

Notwithstanding this qualification, however, I believe we can see how PI can be treated retrospectively as an illustration

of the usefulness of Sartre's BN type of approach to the human being as a conscious bodily existent or for-itself. In particular, Sartre's acceptance of the experience of the mental image allied to investigation of how it is accomplished by an integration of knowledge, affectivity and movement gives us a practical application of Sartre's approach in BN of treating consciousness as such but as arising out of the unified conscious bodily existent or for-itself.

CHAPTER 5: THE "SKETCH FOR A THEORY OF THE EMOTIONS" AS AN APPLICATION OF "BEING AND NOTHINGNESS"

Sartre's Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions,[1] published in 1939, a year before PI, can, I believe, also be looked at as a concrete application of the BN type of approach to the human being to a particular area of human life, in this case the emotions. The Sketch (as the work will hereafter be referred to) can serve retrospectively as an illustration of how the integrated conscious bodily human being or for-itself of BN operates.

Sartre himself points us in the direction of treating the Sketch in this way. In his introduction and conclusion to the Sketch, Sartre stresses that his investigation of the emotions requires a fuller theory of the human being and the world in general. In the introduction, Sartre says that he is offering only a sketch of a phenomenological theory of the emotions. A full phenomenology, he suggests, would first of all set out the essence of "man," "consciousness" and the "world." This would also be an "anthropology,"[2] in Sartre's wide sense of the term, giving us the essence of what it is to be human. Work such as the Sketch would eventually rest on the foundation of this fuller phenomenology. In the conclusion, Sartre designates the fuller theory as "progressive"[3] phenomenology which subsumes "regressive"[4] phenomenology or particular investigations such as that of the emotions. Here, I should point out that Sartre in the Sketch deals primarily with emotions in the sense of full scale emotional outpourings such as a fit of anger. I will have more to say on this aspect of the Sketch later.

Sartre's later BN provided the fuller phenomenology. However, I believe that a close reading of the Sketch shows that Sartre at this stage is already operating under the same basic view of the conscious human being and the world that he expounds at length later, in BN. He does not yet use the terms "for-itself" and "in-itself" but the basic meanings of the concepts can be found in the Sketch. Sartre here insists that the human being must be studied in terms of consciousness but he also views consciousness and the body as aspects of a synthesis. He also talks of the body as "immediately lived"[5] by consciousness, anticipating the detailed study of the lived body undertaken by Sartre in BN. He applies this kind of thinking in the Sketch in studying how our emotions are expressed physically. Sartre, then, is clearly operating in the Sketch with the same basic view of the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent or for-itself that he employs in BN. Hence Sartre in the Sketch (and elsewhere) sometimes uses the term "consciousness" as synonymous with "human being," the proviso being that the consciousness spoken of is always the embodied consciousness of the human being.

Sartre's treatment of the world in the Sketch is also similar to his BN view. He views the world as a deterministic one in which we have to follow difficult procedures in order to achieve our goals. But he also looks at how the world appears to us objectively as imbued with our interests. This is consistent with Sartre's view in BN of how being-in-itself exists independently and contingently but only appears as a

"world," strictly speaking, through the for-itself's consciousness of it.

I shall therefore attempt here to show how the Sketch can serve as an illustration of the usefulness of Sartre's approach to the human being. In this regard, the Sketch is particularly interesting in that Sartre there makes some explicit points about methodology, points he puts into practice in the later BN without specifically discussing them for themselves.

Sartre begins with his methodological points. He attacks the prevalent approach of psychology to the human being as too narrowly "scientific." The psychologist using this approach treats his or her subject, the human being, as the physicist treats his.[6] (Going back to my earlier examples, this is the same basic approach used by Armstrong or Dennett.)

Sartre makes two main criticisms of this approach by which he also sets out his own methodological principles. Firstly, he argues that the narrow scientific approach, as I will call it, has a too restricted concept of experience. (E.g. studying only the physical behaviour and physiological changes in the body involved in emotion without any wider view of what emotion means for the human being.) Sartre, using Husserlian terminology, argues that room must be made for the "experience of essences."[7] We need not get bogged down in the Husserlian terminology here. Sartre's basic point is that by the very fact that we decide to investigate the emotions we, who are the people who have the emotions,

already have some idea, even if undeveloped, of what emotion as our experience is. Or, to use the terminology, we already have experience of the essence of emotion.

This leads on to Sartre's second criticism of the narrow approach. Sartre's complaint is that it does not take account of the fact that, in studying the human being, the investigator "is himself that which he is studying."[8] From this perspective, to study the human being with the same attitude the physicist takes with his or her subject is to ignore an important aspect of the human being. It entails that he or she is not studying human beings as they actually are.

Earlier, I argued that we must take account of the fact that, in our everyday lives, we feel ourselves to be "experiencing centres" for whom the things and events of the world mean something. I argued that any reductionist theory trying to explain this "conscious" aspect of human existence away by identifying it with the purely physical grates against our experience since, no matter what the theory says, we still have the feeling of ourselves as experiencing centres. I argued that it was therefore more true to the facts to accept consciousness as such while at the same time allowing for the study of what makes it possible. I treated BN as a detailed carrying out of such an approach. Sartre here in the Sketch is explicitly stating that this is his type of approach. He wants to attempt to study the emotions in terms of the conscious human being.

Sartre next gives a general overview and criticism of classic and psychoanalytic theories of the emotions. I am not here going to deal with these theories in detail. However, it will be useful to briefly look at Sartre's treatment of them for the light they shed on the kind of problems Sartre wants to solve with his own theory. As against the peripheric theory which concentrates on the physical aspects of emotion, Sartre wants to formulate a theory of the emotions introducing consciousness as their producer. As against the Gestaltists and psychoanalytic theorists, Sartre wants his theory to use the concept of consciousness explicitly and consistently.

The peripheric theory, as expounded by William James among others, literally puts the consciousness of the emotion on the periphery and lays most emphasis on the physical bodily occurrence. A feeling of sadness does not cause a woman to cry. It is, rather, the other way round: the woman is sad because she cries. Emotion is simply a bodily upset and an awareness of it. For Sartre, this theory cannot adequately explain the emotions. For example, he notes that the physiological conditions of the body in anger and joy are very similar, the physiological upset in anger being slightly more intense. "For all that," Sartre says, "anger is not a greater intensity of joy; it is something else, at least as it presents itself to consciousness."[9] Our experience as conscious human beings of feelings of joy and anger and so on cannot be reduced to the bodily occurrences accompanying them.

Sartre with his theory, then, will try to explain the emotions with reference to consciousness, to show how the conscious human being becomes emotional. However, this leaves Sartre with the problem of showing how consciousness relates to what we ordinarily see as the bodily manifestations of emotions such as quickening of the heartbeat, tears etc. This mirrors the problem we saw earlier at the general level of how consciousness is related to the body.

Sartre sees other theorists, such as Janet, the Gestaltists and the psychoanalysts as going beyond the peripheric theory but not far enough. Janet studies emotional behaviour rather than just physiological upsets. He views emotional behaviour as one of defeat brought on when life becomes too difficult. Janet gives the example of a patient who wants to make a confession. However, it is too difficult for her so she breaks down and cries.[10] For Sartre, this usefully introduces "finality,"[11] looking at the ends involved in a human enterprise. According to Sartre, however, Janet does not pursue this consistently. He talks of the emotional behaviour as an automatic diversion of liberated nervous energy, thus heading back in the direction of peripheric theory.

Sartre sees the Gestaltists as more consistently using the concept of finality. For example, they treat anger as functional, as in the case of tearing up the paper on which a problem is written. They study the break-up of one "form" and its replacement by another, e.g. calmness replaced by the

state of anger. Sartre insists, however, that we must have some conception of consciousness as that which constitutes the different forms and is continuous through them.[12]

Sartre commends psychoanalysis for examining the "significance" to the human individual as a whole of "psychic facts" such as the emotions.[13] Sartre gives the example of a woman who faints whenever she sees laurel. The psychoanalyst discovers that she had an unfortunate experience in childhood in a locale with laurel bushes. The psychoanalyst's explanation is that the woman faints to avoid the painful memory motivated by the laurel.[14]

Sartre accepts the use of finality here. However, he rejects the underlying principle of psychic causality employed by psychoanalysis.[15] Emotional behaviour is seen as caused by the "unconscious." For Sartre, this detracts from the idea of significance that psychoanalysis introduced. There is an inconsistency in that emotional behaviour is looked on as both purposive and as the result of an unconscious causal process. Sartre wants to show how emotion is the product of a unitary consciousness.

However, this leaves Sartre with his own problem. Sartre himself admits that the significance of our emotions is not always explicit. They are not a matter of voluntary deliberation. We even sometimes struggle against our emotions, e.g. trying to master our fear or control our anger. "Thus", Sartre concedes:

> "we have not only no consciousness of any finality of emotion, we are also rejecting emotion with all our strength and it invades us in spite of ourselves. Phenomenology must resolve these contradictions."[16]

Psychoanalysis, then, has accounted for this problem in its own way with its notion of the unconscious. Sartre is rejecting the unconscious but he will then have to find his own way to account for this problem.

Before we look at Sartre's sketch of a theory, then, we can sum up the task before him. He has to formulate a theory of the emotions showing explicitly and consistently how consciousness is responsible for them. In doing so he must also try to account for two outstanding issues: the relation of consciousness to the physical aspects of emotions and the problem of the "unconscious." Let us now look at Sartre's sketch of a theory, bearing these points in mind.

First of all, let us remember that Sartre deals primarily with full scale emotional outpourings such as flight in fear or a fit of anger with bodily behaviour and physiological occurrences such as the pounding of the heart or trembling. Sartre looks at various examples of such emotions. However, he first of all makes what for him is an essential point from the outset. This is that the individual acting emotionally, or the emotional consciousness from Sartre's perspective, is primarily non-reflective and directed at the emotive object in the world rather than at the "emotional state" itself, though reflection on the latter is a possible secondary phenomenon.

What Sartre is saying here is that when I am angry or afraid, I do not first of all reflect on the fact that I an angry or afraid. Such reflection is perfectly possible but anger or fear means first of all being conscious of the fearful or hateful object. The experience of anger or fear is first of all an awareness of some object which has the quality of hatefulness or of being frightening. E.g. I am aware of a despicable person or of a menacing dog. During the experience, the "despicableness" is part of the person or the "menace" is part of the dog. It is only secondarily that I can reflect on myself and tell myself explicitly that I am angry or afraid.

For Sartre, then, when one acts emotionally one does not primarily reflect on oneself. But this does not mean that one is "unconscious." One has a "non-positional" or "non-thetic" consciousness of self. That is, I experience carrying out the activity I am engaged in but without specifically going through a mental process of saying to myself that I am going through this activity. For Sartre, this applies to any of our normal everyday activities, not just to the emotions.

This is the same view that we saw Sartre employs later in BN with his notion of the "pre-reflective cogito" and also earlier in The Transcendence of the Ego (see Chapter 1 of this thesis). I believe Sartre is correct here. Human beings do not engage in a continuous introspection. Yet my activities are precisely my activities and, as we saw Sartre argue in BN, if I was not conscious of self in the primary

non-thetic way then I would not be able to reflect on my activities as mine. I would not be able to connect them to myself.

In the Sketch, Sartre gives his notion of non-thetic consciousness of self an interesting and dramatic twist when he states that:

> "unreflective conduct is not unconscious conduct. It is non-thetically conscious of self; and its way of being conscious of self is to transcend and apprehend itself out in the world as a quality of things."[17]

Consciousness is not primarily conscious of self but of the world. However, this world is its world with objects that concern it with qualities of being joyous or horrible and so on that it puts into them. Sartre is here giving a conception of the world as "self-ized," if I can put it that way. Consciousness, in being conscious of the world, is being conscious of itself non-reflectively in seeing its concerns out there in the world.

Let me now give a brief overview of Sartre's theory. Firstly, Sartre notes that the goals of our normal everyday activity have to be achieved in specific ways involving difficult procedures. To take my own example, to fix my television set I have to solder wires, replace valves and so on. Our world is difficult. When this difficulty becomes too much for us we become emotional, transforming ourselves so that we can transform the world into one not governed by difficult procedures but by "magic." E.g. I attempt to fix my television set but to no avail. It is too difficult. I

throw down my tools in disgust and give the television set an angry thump, exclaiming "oh that damned stupid thing!" But this emotional behaviour is not effectual. It does not try to alter the object by normal procedures. Rather, by magic it imposes a new quality on it. E.g. by my tantrum I transform the television set from the object I dearly want to repair into "that damned stupid thing" which I am not going to bother with any more.

In this example I am not reflecting that I have made myself angry to get out of a difficult task. Nevertheless, under Sartre's view of consciousness, it is not the case that my "sub-conscious" mind has caused my anger and that I am unaware of this. It is just that consciousness is not reflecting on itself but is directed at the television set "needing to be fixed" and then at the television set that has become that "damned stupid thing."

Let us now look at Sartre's theory in more detail. The grasping of specific means (difficult procedures) as the only way to achieve our goals is described by Sartre as "the pragmatic intuition of the determinism of the world."[18] Sartre compares the world, as the environment in which our activities have to take place, with a pin-ball machine:

> "you ... set the little balls rolling: there are pathways traced between hedges of pins, and holes pierced where the pathways cross one another. The ball is required to complete a predetermined course, making use of the required paths and without dropping into the holes. This world is <u>difficult</u>."[19]

Sartre is here simply referring to the fact of our experience that specific actions are required to achieve our goals. We cannot achieve them by waving a magic wand. Our "normal, well adapted activity" accepts this.[20]

Sartre contrasts this with emotional behaviour in which one acts on the world as if it were governed by magic. Emotion for Sartre, then, involves a transformation of the world. The task is too difficult and I cannot put up with this difficult world any longer. I therefore try to change the world by living it as though it was governed by magic rather than pin-ball machine style determinism. I do this non-reflectively. I am not specifically conscious of my emotional condition but, rather, of the magical world. However, this emotional conduct is not effectual. I do not modify the object by using procedures. I just impose a new quality on it (like the stupidness of my television set).

Sartre gives a simple example of this imposition of a new quality on the object of consciousness. I lift my hand to pluck a bunch of grapes but find that they are beyond my reach. I "resolve" the difficulty by shrugging my shoulders and muttering that the grapes are too green, magically conferring on them the disagreeable quality. For Sartre, emotion is an extreme version of this type of behaviour. In the grapes example, he says, "the comedy is only half sincere":

> "But let the situation be more critical; let the incantory behaviour be maintained in all seriousness: and there you have emotion."[21]

Sartre examines various cases of full-blown emotions where we are really captivated by the new quality of the object. We believe it and our behaviour together with the physiological changes in our body (e.g. pounding of the heart) express this:

> "during emotion, it is the body which, directed by the consciousness, changes its relationship with the world so that the world should change its qualities. If emotion is play-acting, the play is one that we believe in."[22]

Sartre looks first at "passive fear."[23] He takes the example of fainting at the sight of a ferocious beast. This seems to be the least well-adapted response one could take since it leaves me defenceless before the danger. However, it makes sense as purposive magical behaviour. I faint, suppressing myself as if by doing this I will have suppressed the beast.

Sartre next turns to flight in "active fear,"[24] e.g. fleeing from the ferocious beast. This might seem a puzzling example to use in that running away could well be effective if I succeed in shaking the beast off and thus escape the danger. What Sartre is saying, however, is that as <u>emotional</u> behaviour it does not have that kind of rational intention. As emotion its magical purpose is to flee from the beast, to turn away from it as if that would make it disappear. Flight, Sartre says, is "fainting away in play."[25]

From fear, Sartre moves on to sadness, firstly "passive sadness."[26] This is characterized by dejected behaviour,

muscular relaxation and cold at the extremities. One sulks and tries to have the least possible contact with the outside world. One seeks out solitude, to be "alone with one's sorrow."

However, for Sartre, this appearing to meditate on one's sorrows is part of the act. One is faced with one's normal daily activities, the usual things "to be done." However, one is deprived of one of the "accustomed conditions" of one's activity. Melancholy is a way of suppressing the obligation to find new ways of going about one's activities without the accustomed condition. Sartre gives the example of becoming financially ruined so that one is deprived of one's usual means of transport, one's car.[27] Melancholy, here, is a way of suppressing the need to look for new ways of coping with one's activities, e.g. taking the bus. It turns the world into a bleak one where one no longer cares about the "things to be done." (We could think of stronger examples such as a person whose loved one has died and who "cannot live without her.")

For Sartre, such emotion transforms our normal differentiated affective world into one of "affective zero."[28] My world is normally one in which I have numerous activities of varying importance, friends I especially like to see and so on. However, I cannot bear dealing with all this without the thing or person I have lost. I suppress it all by withdrawing into the refuge of my room, turning the world outside into a bleak one where things no longer matter.

Again, this is ineffectual. It does not help us cope with our activities, it just confers a quality of being valueless on them. One is hiding from them just as the fainter hides from the beast.

Sartre next considers the "active" form of sadness.[29] He takes Janet's example of a woman patient who came to see him to make a confession but, in the event, could not bear to do so and burst into tears.[30] Sartre views the sobbing as a magical behaviour by which the woman transforms the world into an incredibly hostile and demanding one. While she is sobbing at this hostile world she cannot make the confession; it will have to be made later.

Again, this behaviour is ineffectual. It is a "magical play-acting of impotence"[31] which only postpones the task to be performed. However, Sartre stresses that he does not mean that this is a case of reflective behaviour deliberately employing crocodile tears. The woman is not specifically thinking about herself: she is directed at the confession to be made and the world which is hostile.

Moving on to Sartre's discussion of anger, he considers this emotion to be "the most evidently functional."[32] Sartre gives various examples, e.g. being unable to resolve a problem and "resolving" the trouble by tearing up the paper on which it is written.[33] Or, in the course of a battle of banter with a friend, I cannot think of a quick come-back to his last witticism. So instead of a witticism I go into a fit of anger.[34] I magically impose the quality of

hatefulness on the object so that I can reproach it, avoiding the original problem. Again we see the ineffectualness: the tension is resolved but not the actual original problem which is avoided.

Up to this point, Sartre has been dealing only with distinctly unhappy situations. Sartre admits that joy would not at first sight fit his theory. However, Sartre claims that a closer look shows that joy can indeed takes it place within his theory. He views it as magical impatient behaviour. He gives the example of someone who has just been told that he has won a lot of money or that he is soon going to see a long-absent loved one.[35] The object of the lucky person's desire (the money or the loved one) is on its way but therefore still separated from him by a length of time. Also, to use the money or to relate to the loved one is going to involve specific activities over a long period of time in the "pin-ball" deterministic world. For now, one indulges oneself, dancing for joy to symbolically or magically possess one's desired object in an instant.

Even joy, then, is ineffectual in Sartre's theory. It is ineffectual in the sense that it can only mimic total possession of its object. The object will ultimately have to be related to by deterministic procedures.

Sartre also considers the slightly different type of full-blown emotion involved in immediate reactions of horror and wonder. E.g. I am frozen in terror at the sight of a grimacing face at the window.[36] For Sartre, this is an

inversion of the situation in the other examples. I was expecting the normal deterministic world but suddenly confront an unexpected magical aspect of the world. I am frozen in terror, believing the face can act on me now magically despite the space and the window between us.

This concludes Sartre's series of cases of full-blown emotion. Sartre stresses that he is not claiming that his series is definitive. There are an infinite variety of different types of emotions, e.g. anger developing from fear (or anger as "fear surpassed"[37]). We have to look at each particular emotional situation. The cases Sartre has looked at are simply examples to illustrate his theory.

Sartre now considers in more detail the relationship between consciousness and the body when we are engaged in the kind of full-blown emotional behaviour as in his examples. This is the aspect of the Sketch I find most important for my purposes, more so even than whether or not Sartre's precise interpretation of emotion as magical avoidance of problems is correct (though I will also consider that question). I have studied BN as showing how the human being should be looked at as an integrated conscious bodily existent whose conscious life can be accepted as such rather than be reduced to something else. The Sketch gives us an example of this approach in practice in the particular area of the emotions. Sartre tries to show how the emotions are the meaningful product of the conscious or experiencing human being but also how at the very same time they are a way the human being as a

conscious bodily existent directly experiences the world in which he or she lives.

Sartre treats an instance of full-blown emotion in a similar way to how he treats the mental image in PI. As we saw in the previous chapter, Sartre views the mental image as a synthesis of an imaginative attitude towards an object, the affective sense one has of the object and also bodily movement which performs the function of making the object seem actually present. Sartre, in the Sketch, treats emotional outpourings in a similar way as a synthesis of a particular type of attitude to the world and its objects and an accompanying physiological upset of the body which symbolizes our seriousness in this new attitude. The one major difference from the case of the mental image is that the emotional attitude confronts the object directly rather than through an analogue.

From Sartre's examples, we can see that there are three main aspects of an emotional outpouring. Firstly, the directedness of consciousness towards an emotive object (e.g. the frightening beast); secondly, emotional behaviour (running away, screaming or whatever); and thirdly, physiological disorder of the body (e.g. trembling). A full-scale emotional outpouring of the type in Sartre's examples has all three aspects. The physiological aspect raises the question of the relationship between consciousness and the body in emotion.

A full-blown emotion, for Sartre, is accompanied by belief. It is "almost undergone,"[38] he says. That is, we are quite seriously engaged in an emotional attitude: we are not jesting. Emotion is not something we can put on merely by displaying the appropriate behaviour such as running away. E.g. I really believe a certain object is horrifying and my physiological condition, trembling etc., expresses this. I am spellbound by the horrifying quality I put into the object. Neither can I stop emotion at will; it is more like something that "fades away of itself."[39]

For Sartre, then, the physiological phenomena "represent the genuineness of the emotion, they are the phenomena of belief."[40] The physiological aspect is part of the synthesis of the emotion along with the directedness to the object and the behaviour. The physiological phenomena are analogous to the behaviour, e.g. the trembling expresses the fear for which one is running away. But at the same time they cannot be reduced to the behaviour. They cannot be stopped like the behaviour (e.g. in fear "one can stop oneself from running but not from trembling.")[41] Physical upset is an essential part of emotion.

This directly faces us with the problem of the body. Sartre has been trying to show how emotion is produced by consciousness but here he is admitting that uncontrollable physiological disturbance is essential to it. Sartre's answer is that the physiological disturbance is meaningless except as part of the synthesis of emotion that the conscious human being enters into. It is here that we can see how

Sartre is operating with the same view of the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent that he employs in BN (as we discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis).

Sartre points out that the body has a dual nature since it is an observable object in the world but is also "immediately lived by the consciousness."[42] The body is the lived body of the conscious human being. Sartre even describes the body as "the point of view upon the universe immediately inherent in consciousness."[43] Sartre in this way inverts the traditional notion of the mind in the body.

This consciousness which lives the body transforms itself to live the world in the magical way. It therefore transforms the body too. It is similar to falling asleep and becoming a dreaming consciousness.[44] What Sartre means by all this is that becoming emotional is a spontaneous activity of the integrated conscious bodily human being. He points out that the physiological disorder involved is a fairly ordinary upset of the body[45] (and we can recall that the upset is similar for two very different emotions, anger and joy). The upset is spontaneously lived by the conscious human being and only has significance as an aspect of emotion through this. It is in this sense that Sartre describes the upset as the body "raised to the level of behaviour."[46]

All this is done in a non-reflective way. We have a non-thetic consciousness only of the finality of our emotion. We are primarily directed at the magical world. One is non-thetically conscious of oneself only and it is only to this

extent, for Sartre, that emotion is insincere. Consciousness is "caught in its own snare."[47] It reacts to its emotive object but this reaction is itself emotional and heightens the emotion. E.g. in the case of fear, "[t]he faster one flees the more one is afraid."[48] Consciousness attributes the captivating quality to the frightening or whatever object and it can be freed only by a purifying reflection or by the disappearance of the emotional situation.

Sartre has in this way, I believe, given us a practical demonstration of the usefulness of his BN type of approach towards the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent. The human being is a biological body in the world. That biological body gives rise to what we call consciousness. From a certain perspective, this consciousness cannot be reduced to something non-conscious. That is, any attempt to reduce it still leaves us with our own experience of ourselves as conscious. E.g. if we were to "translate" the emotions into Armstrong language as purely dispositions to behave in certain sorts of ways, then there would be something left over and unaccounted for. That is, I can still recall my vivid emotional experience of the hateful person or the frightening beast. We experience ourselves as conscious bodily existents and this experience is as much part of the evidence to be examined as is the physical body that can be observed as an object in the outside world. Sartre has not cut out either aspect of the human being in his treatment of the emotions. He has looked at how the human being as a conscious bodily existent sometimes reacts to the world in the emotional way, an experience involving an

attitude to the world and an expression of this attitude in the physiological condition of the body.

I shall later move on to consider the question regarding how useful Sartre's theory is in actually interpreting the meaning of emotion for the human being. But first of all, am I correct to place the Sketch within a wider view of the conscious human being and the world akin to that of BN? Ronald Aronson in his book, Jean-Paul Sartre - Philosophy in the World[49] alternatively characterizes Sartre at the stage of the Sketch as setting up an opposition between consciousness, viewed as signifying and as distinct from the determined objects outside it, and the Newtonian-style deterministic world, with no idea that consciousness forms this world.

However, I believe Aronson's account of what Sartre says in the Sketch is too simplistic. In the introduction, Sartre speaks of how a fuller phenomenology would investigate the source of the world, the "transcendental and constitutive consciousness"[50] (borrowing a term from Husserl once again). Sartre does not elaborate further, that is left to the future progression, but it shows that Sartre even here is operating with an idea of the world as owing its form in some way to consciousness. There is a balance in Sartre's comments about the world in the Sketch. On the one hand, the world is marked out with our concerns and interests (one's self out in the world as a quality of things) and we can act on it but, on the other hand, we cannot act by fiat, to get what we want requires us to go by the rules of the "real" world by

using specific procedures. This is the same type of balance as in BN: the for-itself makes the in-itself a world through its consciousness of it but the in-itself is independent being and does not of itself require to be made into a world and leaves the world with a co-efficient of adversity which resists us.

Aronson also argues that in the Sketch and in PI consciousness is opposed to the deterministic world and is free only to "withdraw" from it into imagery or the emotions.[51] Again, I believe this is too simple. In PI, as we saw in the preceding chapter, Sartre sees negating activity as involved in action or affectivity (e.g. missing a dead person), although he viewed this as an implicit reference to the "imaginary." Also, Sartre's examples of imagining objects absent friends etc. presuppose perceiving and acting in the world first, otherwise we would not have anything to represent in imagery. In the Sketch, emotional behaviour is an escape into magic we sometimes use when we cannot cope with the determinism of the world. But this presupposes our using our freedom in the deterministic world, filling it with our concerns and choosing the activities we carry out. In this respect, we should remember that Sartre does not simply talk of the determinism of the world but of the "pragmatic intuition of the determinism of the world."[52] We pragmatically respect the determinism of the world and work with it in order to achieve our goals. In BN, Sartre does talk more of actions in the world but this is not a stunning departure from the earlier works. They were concerned with more limited aspects of human life. In BN, as

he had already presaged in the Sketch, Sartre extends his analysis.

We can now return to the question of how Sartre's sketch of a theory stands up as an interpretation of what emotion means for the human being. The first point to note is that Sartre concentrates on the emotions in the sense of full outbursts of emotional behaviour. But surely this is too restrictive. What about the emotions people may be said to have not just in outbursts but also generally in normal life? E.g. the love of one's wife or husband or someone who is not at this moment jumping for joy or wailing in sorrow but who if he or she is asked about it or reflects on it will say that he or she is generally happy with life or full of sadness.

However, we must remember that Sartre is offering a sketch of a theory only. He concentrates on full-blown emotional behaviour as the culmination of our emotionality and since it presents philosophical problems about the relation of consciousness to the body. But a close reading of the Sketch shows that Sartre does also have a wider conception of emotion.

In his introduction, Sartre says that a proper phenomenological study of the emotions "would deal with affectivity as an existential mode of human reality."[53] I take this to mean that all our activities and dealings with things in the world involve emotion in the sense of the "feel" or affective quality they have for us. In this respect, we can recall that Sartre says in PI that we imbue

all objects that we perceive with affectivity and that these affective qualities are bound up in the objects as their deepest sense for us. Sartre also, when considering the example of joy, distinguishes between joy as a full-blown emotion and joy as "the joyful feeling which betokens an equilibrium or a state of adaptation."[54]

Full-blown emotional behaviour, then, is a case where our affectivity becomes heightened and is given priority. E.g. the person I love whom I have not seen for a long time is invested with a quality of belovedness. When I jump for joy at seeing the person again, I give this quality heightened importance (though, of course, I am directed at the person who has this quality, not at the latter per se).

Sartre's theory of the (full-blown) emotions, then, rests on this prior emotionality or affectivity of ours. This is also borne out by Sartre's view, in the Sketch, of the world as mapped out with our concerns. This affectivity is a practical example of how we make the world properly our world. Sartre's conclusion also bears out the view that Sartre has a wider view of emotionality on which the outpourings rest. For there he again speaks of how his regression on the emotions is limited. It is a theory of emotion which:

> "postulates an antecedent description of affectivity so far as the latter constitutes the being of the human-reality - i.e. in so far as it is constitutive of our human-reality to be affective human-reality."[55]

In the progression, we would proceed from such a wider view.

This general affective aspect of human beings allows us to account for "general" emotions such as the love of a husband and wife for each other. The couple are not at this moment engaged in a passionate embrace and are not even with each other but the love still exists. It is a quality they have put into the world and it comes to the fore in emotional moments.

Sartre also allows for emotional moments which have not reached the full-scale level. He talks of "subtle"[56] emotions where one grasps an emotive quality of the world but not to the extent of being overcome by it. There are also "weak"[57] emotional moments in which one imbues objects with only a weak affective character. Sartre also identifies "spurious"[58] emotional moments, e.g. feigning delight at a gift I am not really greatly interested in. Sartre by no means, then, restricts us to emotional outbursts.

But as regards the latter, Sartre stresses their ineffectualness and how they are a self-deluding attempt at escape. Sartre in his discussion of psychoanalytic theorists even describes them as "bad faith,"[59] the term he uses extensively in the later BN. This raises the question of the value of the emotions. If the emotions are avoidance behaviour or bad faith, is Sartre suggesting that we should give them up?

Spiegelberg sees Sartre as heading in this direction. As regards this issue, he writes in The Phenomenological Movement:

> "This strikingly low estimate of the place and right of the emotions in the human economy would seem to suggest that an authentic existence which faces up to the world would not only have to purify but to eliminate the emotions completely, as the stoics would have us do. Sartre does not suggest this explicitly. But this is one of those occasions where his underlying Cartesianism comes to the fore. Certainly, Sartre is anything but an emotive irrationalist.
>
> ... his 'theory' may well serve as a working hypothesis, provided it does not block our way to alternative hypotheses. A less rationalistic and moralistic approach might well consider whether emotions do not have such alternative functions as preparation for active change rather than for futile escape from reality."[60]

Certainly, Sartre does emphasize the escapism of the emotions. However, I believe three things Sartre says in the Sketch counter-balance the impression that he is "anti-emotions." Firstly there is his view that it is part of the essence of the human being to be "affective human reality." Secondly, there is Sartre's characterization of the emotional consciousness as non-thetically conscious so that the emotions are "insincere" only to that extent, not pre-meditatively. Thirdly and finally, there is Sartre's declaration towards the end of the book that emotion is one of the "great" and "essential" attitudes of consciousness. Let me now look at each of the three in turn.

As I discussed earlier, for Sartre progressive phenomenology would proceed from a basis viewing the human being as in essence affective human-reality. In the Sketch, Sartre implicitly operates with a wider view of emotionality in the sense that the human being as an affective being fills the world with his or her concerns and affective qualities. The full-blown emotions are the climax of this affectivity. Sartre certainly does not suggest that we ought to dispense with affectivity. It would be an impossibility to do so on this view. For the human being is held to be in essence a being which creates its own concerns and interests and has its own feelings about its situation. This wider emotionality is not something we could stop. It is not considered bad faith but is part of what makes us humans rather than objects in the world pure and simple. Sartre certainly would not want, then, to "eliminate the emotions completely" if that also included the wider emotionality.

Secondly, Sartre views the emotional consciousness as non-thetic and only insincere to that extent.[61] Now Sartre said that most of our activity is done in a non-thetically conscious way and that (full-blown) emotion is a non-thetically conscious transformation and that we captivate ourselves in it. This raises the question of how far it would be possible for us to eradicate emotional outbursts, how far it would be possible to make a reflective decision to eradicate them and stick to this decision. I think Sartre accepts that emotion is one of those capacities the human being has which he or she will give expression to at some point, though it is still consciousness that makes itself

emotional. What we could do is to reflect on and try to better understand our emotionality and prevent ourselves from taking it to excess. This would accord with Sartre's "existential psychoanalysis" in BN where (as we saw in Chapter 2 of this thesis) he says that the human being builds up his or her own character starting from a (pre-reflective) "choice of being." It would not be possible simply to change one's character or end a neurosis at will. Nevertheless, our character and any neuroses we have are not parts of our consciousness as a brick is part of a house. Consciousness is responsible for their development. By reflecting on ourselves it would be possible to bring to more explicit awareness why we are the way we are and begin to deal with our problems.

As regards Sartre's view of emotions as escape into "magic" and as bad faith, I believe he does have a point. It fits well as an interpretation of such cases as fainting in the face of a problem: suppressing myself so that the problem is no more, as if my turning away would make it go away. Or the case of passive sadness. One can see what Sartre means there by "magic": one cannot cope with one's normal activities so one "puts a spell on them" to get rid of them, the spell consisting of an imposition of a quality of valuelessness on them as part of the "bleak" world.

However, I think the idea of emotion as bad faith could be taken too far. In BN, Sartre uses the term "bad faith" to cover those times when we try to deny our freedom and rest in some situation, e.g. the waiter who puts everything into just

"being" the perfect waiter, hiding behind the role. An authentic existence would mean accepting our freedom and not trying to hide behind roles or one's "character" perceived as a pre-given, unchangeable trait. However, in BN, Sartre also uses the term "bad faith" in a another sense, although he does not explicitly say that it is different. I am referring to his description of reflection on oneself as a kind of bad faith. Reflection on oneself is possible, Sartre says, but it is never possible to fully step outside of oneself to reflect on oneself with total objectivity as if being another person looking on. Reflection, then, is bad faith in that one is attempting the impossible, to objectify oneself.

Sartre's point is perfectly understandable. I can reflect on myself but I am myself and can never escape from this, I cannot fully reflect on myself objectively. However, Sartre obviously cannot be telling us to stop reflecting on ourselves. Is this, then, not stretching the concept of bad faith too far? Our reflection has limitations but this is not on a par with the self-delusory life of Sartre's famous waiter. Taking the term "bad faith" to extremes, we could call producing a mental image bad faith because we know we cannot fully recapture the substantial presence of an object "in the flesh" through an image. In PI, Sartre recognizes the limit but does not apply the tag of "bad faith" to imagery.

In the Sketch, Sartre actually only uses the term "bad faith" once. But he does say in general that the emotions are ineffectual and escapist. Now just as I have tried to

distinguish between bad faith proper and activities that have their built-in limitations so we could examine the degree of ineffectualness and escapism of different emotions. E.g. a description of dancing for joy as bad faith would seem to be rather harsh and "killjoyish." But we could say that joy is ineffectual in the sense that my dance for joy which gleefully seizes the beloved person as a whole will have to give way to the actual more complicated moment to moment pursuing of the relationship. We could then also take on board Spiegelberg's suggestion that emotion could function as preparation for change. E.g. I dance for joy, seizing the situation as a whole as a swimmer before the start of a race looks at the length of the pool and takes a deep breath. Sartre himself gives a slight suggestion of this when he says that the man who dances for joy on being told by a woman that she loves him is for the moment giving himself a rest. On the other hand, fainting at the approach of a beast is ineffectual and in bad faith to a more extreme degree, denying the danger but, far from preparing me to cope with it, exposing me to it. At the most extreme end, emotion could cross the boundary into "mental illness," e.g. a sadness that developed into an indefinite withdrawal from the world. We could, then, make the notion of bad faith or escapism more flexible.

If I may turn now to the third aspect of the Sketch counter-balancing its seeming anti-emotions stance, Sartre near the end of the book describes emotional behaviour as "the return of consciousness to the magical attitude, one of the great attitudes which are essential to it."[62] So far from

disparaging the emotions, in this instance they are great and essential. But how can Sartre say that the magical attitude, which he has described as a debasement of consciousness and is ineffectual etc., is great and essential? I believe we can find a clue to the answer from PI. There, our ability to imagine is essential in the sense that it is an expression of the same conditions for the existence of consciousness in general. The conditions were that consciousness be able to posit reality as a whole and negate it. The imagination is seen as an expression of that same ability. Imagination is essential, then, in that a consciousness that could not imagine would not be consciousness for it would not meet the conditions of imagination and of consciousness in general.

Similarly, the magical attitude is "great" and "essential" for a consciousness which did not meet the conditions of possibility for descending to this attitude (the conditions being the ability to imbue the world with one's own concerns etc.) would not meet the conditions for consciousness in general.

Taking these three aspects of the Sketch into account, then, we can see that the position is a little more complicated and ambiguous than simply being "anti-emotions."

However, from the perspective of our study of what the human being is, the main import of the Sketch, as I pointed to earlier, is in providing us with a practical demonstration of using Sartre's approach towards the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent.

But before I close this chapter, I wish to take a look at the one specific instance in the Sketch where Sartre deals with the social. This is a passage which concerns our perception of and dealings with other people. It is worth quoting at length:

> "... the category of 'magic' governs the interpsychic relations between men in society and, more precisely, our perception of others. The magical, as Alain says, is 'the mind crawling among things'; that is, an irrational synthesis of spontaneity and passivity. It is an inert activity, a consciousness rendered passive. But it is precisely in that form that others appear to us, and this, not because of our position in relation to them, nor in consequence of our passions, but by essential necessity. Indeed, consciousness can only be a transcendent object by undergoing the modification of passivity. Thus the meaning of a face is, first of all, that <u>of the</u> consciousness (not a sign of the consciousness) but of a consciousness that is altered, degraded - which precisely is passivity."[63]

I believe this relates to Sartre's view of consciousness as necessarily embodied, as set out more fully in <u>BN</u>. Since consciousness is not a substance on its own but lives the body, we do come into contact with other consciousnesses, other people whose bodies are immediately taken as conscious bodies. The conscious human being is a unity so we do not just infer that other people are conscious like us, being able only to infer this "because of our position in relation to them," i.e because we cannot get "inside" their minds "if they have such a thing." But at the same time, because (active) consciousness is (necessarily) embodied, one grasps another consciousness as both spontaneous and passive. E.g. one sees someone's face - since it is lived by consciousness

- as fully the face of that person, not a sign emitted by him or her. But this other consciousness is rendered passive in the sense that one encounters it as expressed in objective happenings: facial expressions, actions and so on. One encounters the face of the consciousness, the character of the consciousness etc. as objectified. Only the consciousness itself experiences its continual (non-thetic) consciousness of itself as actively responsible for what it does. This by "essential necessity" because consciousness is (necessarily) embodied. Sartre is further saying, I think, that the synthesis of spontaneity and passivity observed in other people is analogous to the synthesis of spontaneity and passivity I put myself into when I become emotional (in that I spontaneously put myself into the magical attitude and thus make the world magical but then become passive, in a sense, in that I then treat the world as simply being magical of itself and react to it - by fainting, fleeing, hitting out etc. - as if I was a passive existent affected by the world).

Sartre continues:

> "... It follows that man is always a sorcerer to man and the social world is primarily magical. Not that it is impossible to take a deterministic view of the inter-psychological world or to build rational superstructures upon it. But then it is these structures that are ephemeral and unstable, it is they that crumble away as soon as the magical aspect of faces, gestures and human situations becomes too vivid. And what happens then, when the superstructures laboriously built up by the reason disintegrate, and man finds himself suddenly plunged back again into the original magic? That is easily predicted; the consciousness seizes upon the magic as magic, and lives it vividly as such. The categories 'suspicious' and

'disquieting', etc. designate the magical, in so far as it is being lived by consciousness or tempting consciousness to live it."[64]

This is another of Sartre's occasional instances where he throws in the outline of another idea with a vague promise to develop it later. My interpretation of it is that Sartre is saying that, because of the analogy mentioned above, it is easy to perceive other people as having magical qualities (as in the earlier case of the grimacing face at the window). The "deterministic view of the inter-psychological world" and the "rational superstructures" built upon it refers to, I believe, how we can build up knowledge of each other and use "deterministic procedures" to get what we want out of each other. E.g. trying to "get on the right side of someone" and asking a favour of them in a way that one knows is likely to elicit a positive response. But this set-up can crumble before me. The person may behave differently than I expected. Their expression of displeasure, appearing in the spontaneous/passive way outlined above, can be treated by me in an emotional way. Sartre, as we saw in Chapter 3 of this thesis, deals with relations with other people at greater length in BN and more clearly, in my view, in not being constrained in a slot within a discussion of the emotions.

This, however, brings us back to the point we reached at the end of Chapter 3 in Part 1. Sartre, has not here in the Sketch nor in PI nor in BN considered the social aspect of the human being in its full depth. He does not in these works have a detailed concern with how people in their inter-actions give rise to a wider society and culture with a

history and so on which then imposes the great weight of a deep social context on the individual. Let us move on now, as promised, to Part 3 where I attempt to show how Sartre maintains the approach of looking at the human being as a free conscious bodily existent or for-itself while extending his thought further into the social dimension.

PART 3: THE FREEDOM OF THE FOR-ITSELF SITUATED AND ENGAGED

CHAPTER 6: "SEARCH FOR A METHOD" AS A VIEW OF THE FOR-ITSELF SITUATED AND ENGAGED

I began this whole exercise by posing the question of what the human being is. I argued that a view of the human being as a determined thing resulted in the reductio ad absurdum of a theory of determinism which is itself determined in the theorist. There is no-one left meaningfully holding the theory, it is just one more event in a chain of caused events. The chain of events is not even known as such: an anonymous undifferentiation holds sway. Against this, I pointed to our own experience of ourselves as experiencing centres. This experience remains despite the theory, leaving the latter with something unaccounted for. I argued that there was a case for trying to study the human being within a perspective of accepting him or her as an experiencing centre.

I have been using Sartre's philosophy as offering us such a perspective. I have gleaned from his works a view of the human being as a conscious bodily existent and we saw how Sartre identifies this experiencing type of existence as the original freedom. However, in Chapter 2, I also looked at how Sartre in BN did not pursue the issue of wider society far enough. The social situation in which the human being arises was treated by Sartre as a given to be transcended by the individual for-itself towards its own goals. He did not pursue the issue of how individual human beings in their complex inter-relations give rise to a wider society which then becomes the ready-made context within which the individual for-itselfs arise. He did not show enough

appreciation of the great prior weight of social context on the individual.

Balancing this, we also saw in Chapter 3 how there is an embryonic social concern in BN in that Sartre investigates the foundations of how we in the first place treat other people as other people like ourselves. He looked at how the for-itself has a being-for-others and he also portrayed the human being as situated in relation to all other human beings (although this still did not lead Sartre to consider the broader societal question I have raised).

Another point of balance raised was that the human being as an experiencing centre must not be erased from the equation once more by taking a deterministic view of how society affects us. We have to have some conception of the experiencing human being who arises within the wider social context but who is a conscious existent coping with life within that system. If we take a simplistic view of the human being as determined by society, then we end up submerged under the anonymous undifferentiation once more since there are no experiencing centres to view society as such. We are thus, as I said earlier, pointed in the direction of maintaining but extending Sartre's holistic approach. This would involve retaining the idea of the human being as a free conscious bodily existent but trying to show how he or she remains such while operating in a socio-historical context.

Sartre himself attempted to carry out this task in his later works. I am here going to briefly look at how Sartre deals with this issue in SM.[1] SM was an introductory work leading towards the far larger Critique of Dialectical Reason.[2] However, SM can stand on its own as a work and suits my purpose here in that it is a concise work dealing quite specifically with the issue of how we should conceive the relationship between the individual and society.

In this later stage of Sartre's development, of course, Sartre had adopted Marxism. I am not here going to consider the question of whether or not Marxism is correct (that would require a thesis of its own) but, rather, tease out Sartre's conception of how the individual remains a free conscious existent while also being an aspect of the totality of society.

In SM, Sartre situates individuals within a continual dialectical totalization of history or, in other words, the on-going process of the development of society through the succession of the class conflicts of every era. Philosophy itself exemplifies this, according to Sartre, for there is only one living philosophy at a time and that philosophy expresses the general movement of society.[3] Sartre is arguing here that every era has one major philosophy which serves as the centre of reference for all others, even opposing ones. The major philosophy grows out of the problems and contradictions of the historical period and therefore we cannot go beyond it until we have gone beyond the historical period itself.

Those intellectuals who appear after the birth of the philosophy of the time work within a cultural field which it dominates. Such intellectuals, then, are not properly to be called "philosophers." Sartre designates them "ideologists." They merely set the system in order or oppose it by a regression to the ideas of the past.[4]

The one philosophy of our time, according to Sartre, is Marxism, and existentialism is relegated to the status of an ideology. It is an enclave within Marxism.[5] Of existentialism, Sartre says:

> "[i]t is a parasitical system living on the margin of Knowledge, which at first it opposed but into which today it seeks to be integrated."[6]

Whereas in BN Sartre emphasized the continual ontological freedom of the for-itself even when one is at the mercy of the torturer, he now believes that Marxism expresses the demands of the proletariat in a society characterized by scarcity and exploitation. In a society split by class struggle, one gains one's livelihood at the expense of other people.[7] Thus we have to consider the human being as first a worker producing the conditions of his or her life.[8] In such a society there is an "immense crowd of sub-men conscious of their sub-humanity."[9]

Sartre now believes, along with Marx, that the reign of true social freedom when one could objectify oneself (in the sense of carving an image of oneself outside in the world through

one's activity) without alienation could not begin until the time when work was imposed by necessity was over:

> "[a]s soon as there will exist for <u>everyone</u> a margin of real freedom beyond the production of life, Marxism will have lived out its span; a philosophy of freedom will take its place. But we have no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom or of this philosophy."[10]

In the current state of society, then, according to Sartre, <u>social</u> freedom is so lacking that we cannot even imagine what it would be like.

Is this Sartre's recantation of his previous work? Does this recognition of the absence of freedom entail that the ontologically free for-itself of <u>BN</u> is debunked? I do not believe so. Sartre does not relapse into determinism by his adoption of Marxism. He argues the first place that the original Marxism of Marx himself was non-determinist.[11]

Marx examined the totality of history and society. Society was founded on the relations of production which corresponded to a given level of the productive forces.[12] In our period of history, the productive forces were in conflict with the relations of production. The capacity of the human being for creative work was alienated, the human being did not recognize himself or herself in his or her own product and his or her exhausting labour appeared to him or her as a burdensome compulsion, a hostile force.[13]

At the same time, however, Marx viewed this alienation as a historical reality suffered by concrete existents.

Alienation was lived by people and was therefore irreducible to a knowing. Also, alienation was the alienation of a definite human capacity (as we looked at in Chapter 2 when I quoted Marx's comment on our "species being" in the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts). The human being was capable of objectification which would be free creative work. Thus the human being could "contemplate himself in a world which he has created."[14]

This is an important point for Sartre. He is still true to the notion that one's slavery or alienation can only appear on the ground of one's ontological freedom. From this perspective, we can argue that Marx's works implicitly demand a theory of consciousness such as that of Sartre. Only a human being as a free for-itself who values his or life and creative capacity can come to a view of himself or herself as oppressed.

For Marx, this oppression could only be overthrown through revolutionary praxis or activity in the world. Therefore, the human agency of concrete human beings was at the centre of the totality of society. Thus the true concrete was real people producing their lives, working, living the totality of society. Concrete people emerged as living the universal in the particular; that is, their life emerged on the background of the conflict of the relations and forces of production but was irreducible to it.

In SM, Sartre insists on the need to maintain existentialism because of the widespread misuse of Marxism in a simplistic

deterministic fashion.[15] This views society as determining the individual and the individual is seen as an abstract moment, only an expression of the determining society. The totality of society is seen as a universal entity of which particular facts are simply manifestations. Sartre holds that he is being more faithful to Marx and to the human being in holding that it is individual human beings who are the concrete moments. They make society real as the people who live it. Marx, according to Sartre's reading, likewise subordinated the facts to the totality but discovered the totality <u>through</u> the facts.

Sartre quotes approvingly Engels' statement that "men themselves make their history but on the basis of prior conditions."[16] However, the simplistic Marxists interpret this to mean that people are blindly determined by economic forces. People are seen as simply embodiments of the social structure. For Sartre, this is to make the human being "a vehicle of inhuman forces." He demands that Marxism "study real men in depth, not dissolve them in a bath of sulphuric acid." [17]

However, neither is Sartre going to consider the human being in a void. He is not going to ignore the fact that the human being is situated in society. Thus, for example, he criticizes Western "amateur" psychoanalytic theorists such as De Man who tried to explain class conflict in terms of the proletariat's "inferiority complex," so ignoring the real socio-economic basis of class conflict.

For Sartre, the dialectical knowing of humanity requires a new rationality:

> "[b]ecause nobody has been willing to establish this rationality within experience I state as a fact - absolutely no one, either in the East or in the West, writes or speaks a word about us that is not a gross error."[18]

Sartre's SM is the search for precisely this rationality. Sartre maintains the autonomy of existentialism in order to establish this new rationality but its purpose is to be integrated into a Marxism devoid of mechanistic determinist additions.

Sartre tries to formulate his own structural, historical anthropology (in Sartre's broad sense of the term, once again). Sartre takes on board the Marxist framework regarding how society develops. However, a close reading of SM shows that, while the "for-itself" is only mentioned once in a footnote, its haunting presence is there throughout. The capitalist society of scarcity and exploitation imposes upon people but that society is the product of human agents who live the universal (the alienating society) in the particular as irreducible existents who also have within themselves the possibility of changing their society. In this way, SM maintains the for-itself but shows it situated and engaged in society. The human being must still be viewed as an ontological freedom, albeit an alienated one. Let us now look in more detail at how Sartre sets out this view.

In SM, Sartre views people and events as going to make up the totality of history and society. However, society is not

some sort of metaphysical entity with an independent being of its own as in, for example, some positions of functionalist sociology. Sartre wishes to avoid the fetishism of a ready-made totality.[19]

Sartre instead takes a dialectical view which holds that:

> "dialectic is at the start only the real movement of a unity in process of being made and not the study, not even the 'functional' and 'dynamic' study of a unity already made."[20]

Therefore, society is not an organism of which we are merely the parts. Society is a moving totality which depends on the people who make it up and on the relations between these people.

We can understand this better by examining what Sartre says is the structure of the human being. True to the for-itself of BN, Sartre argues that the human being is characterized by his or her going beyond the present towards the future.[21] The human being is signifying in that even the least of his or her gestures refers to the future, as in our earlier example of the tennis player). For the individual's behaviour is defined not only by present factors but also by its relation to an as yet non-existent object, the project, which the individual is trying to bring into being by "praxis,"[22] human activity by which the individual inscribes himself or herself in and, indeed, by which he or she makes the human world.

Thus the project has a double character. It is the negation of a (presently) refused reality projected to be produced.

Therefore, in relation to the present given, praxis is negativity, the negation of a negation, but as such is also, in relation to the object aimed at, positivity. For Sartre, this "perpetual production of oneself by work and praxis is our peculiar structure." [23]

The project is not to be confused with the will, though it can become this (just as the pre-reflective cogito of BN can become reflective). The structure of the human being is one of perpetual disequilibrium. That is, it is an immediate relation to the other-than-oneself. One projects oneself across the field of possibilities some of which one realizes to the exclusion of others. Thus, of the structure of the human being, Sartre says: "we call it also choice or freedom."[24]

One's whole life also makes up a unified project so that one continually has to deal with one's past history, spiralling past the same points again and again. Yet one still has to relate to these points with one's freedom.

However, there is a new development in Sartre's thought in SM in that he holds the basic project to be that of need. This more explicitly admits the constraints on the human being than the desire prominent in BN.

The concepts of praxis and the project in SM, on the other hand, are quite compatible with the ontological freedom described in BN. In BN, the world only exists as it is perceived by the for-itself. In SM, Sartre still holds this

view. He says that "the world is human ... profundity comes to the world through man."[25] However, this is not only concerned with perception. The physical world has been worked over by human praxis so that many of the objects we live with every day are signs.[26] That is, they are the objectification of someone else's (or even my own) praxis. The thousand franc note, the pedestrian crossing, the signpost are, for Sartre, "collective objects" which are the result of a project which lies behind them and which addresses us through the objects. Therefore, while collective objects have a definite reality, that reality is parasitical; they are supported by the concrete activity of individuals.[27]

Groups such as the family, one's class or even the totality of society are collectives. However, now that we have examined the ontological structure of the human being, we can see that a group or a society can never have a metaphysical existence of its own. For Sartre, therefore, there are only real relations between people and relations between those relations. "Community," Sartre says, "escapes us on all sides."[28] This means that "the totality exists at best only in the form of a detotalized totality."[29] Society is the work of the human being.

However, for Sartre, that society is in our time one of scarcity and exploitation. While it is still incapable of emancipating itself from its needs, it is "thereby defined by its techniques and its tools."[30] It is crushed by its needs and dominated by its exploitative mode of production.

Sartre, then, accepts that Marxism has shown how class interests impose on individual interests and how, for example, the market - at first a complex of human relations - becomes reified so that it seems to be more real than the actual buyers and sellers.[31] Capital becomes a power opposing working people.

This situation has a profound consequence for the human being. From birth, we live in an exploitative society so that we are "lost since childhood."[32] Even our speech and thought is deviated. Also, the human individual who projects himself or herself towards his or her field of possibilities finds that this field is a social one and is, for many people, a very restricted field. In contradictory capitalist society, "the capitalist owns the instruments of labour, and the worker does not own them."[33] Therefore, to take Sartre's example, a working class person, due to lack of money, may not find the possibility of becoming a doctor open to him or her whereas it may be a real possibility for a bourgeois person.[34] We are in this way defined negatively as well as positively in relation to the field of possibles. The working class person is aware of a lack, a future from which he or she is barred.

However, Sartre has already said that society is a <u>detotalized</u> totality. Even capitalist society is the product of human relations. Going back, then, to our example of the market, we see that its reality "no matter how inexorable its laws may be ... rests on the reality of alienated individuals and on their separation."[35] Also, capital is a social power

which has to be sustained by the activities of capitalists. We could say, then, that Sartre is portraying capitalist society as the situation in which the for-itself exists. The for-itself in such a society is alienated but exists nonetheless. Thus Sartre says that the conditions of capitalist society are the conditions upon which people make history - but nevertheless it is the people who make it.[36]

Individuals and groups still perform real actions upon history. What happens in the society of class inequality and conflict is that the enterprise of individuals and groups can become countered by the actions of others so that they lose the real meaning of their action in the totalizing movement of history.[37] It is only in this sense, then, that society can be said to "make" the human individual. However, Sartre holds that the human being is characterized by what he or she succeeds in making of what he or she has been made.[38] Sartre refuses to confuse the alienated person with a thing. The human being is the being of praxis so he or she has to go beyond the conditions made for him or her in his or her practical activity.

Sartre gives as an example the position of a worker. His or her objective starting point is his or her work and wages but he or she goes beyond it in, for example, joining a union or voting to go on strike.[39] This entails that "the individual is conditioned by the social environment" but also that "he turns back upon it to condition it in turn."[40] The human being is "a dialectical surpassing of all that is simply given."[41]

Sartre therefore proposes to use what he calls a "progressive-regressive" method in studying society. In the progressive moment, all the elements of society are studied as part of the totality of society, using the Marxist framework which, as we have seen, has identified that society as one in which there is a conflict between the relations and forces of production and in which the human being is alienated. However, the method recognizes that this is only the abstract, general truth. What is the real concrete is how that general truth is lived by real people in their particular circumstances. It would be wrong, therefore, to take a person or an event and view them as mere appearances which are in reality simply embodiments of the class conflict. In fact, the class conflict is nothing except how it is lived and suffered by concrete existents. Sartre points out that:

> "within the framework of the Marxist interpretation ... and for the intellectual who is experienced in the dialectical method, men, their objectifications and their labours, human relations, are finally what is most concrete"[42]

Therefore, in the regressive moment, we study our object - a group, a person, a book, an event etc. - in its historical particularity.

However, Sartre does not intend to study the object of enquiry in isolation. Therefore, his method is one of cross-reference between the object in its particularity and the wider societal context in which it is situated:

> "It will progressively determine a biography (for example) by examining the period, and the period by studying the biography."[43]

In this sense, then, everything is connected with everything yet each thing is distinct from all the rest. My life expresses in some way capitalist society: yet it is my life, the life of a concrete, irreducible existent.

Therefore, Sartre uses Marxism as the "vertical synthesis" in which we will study everything as part of the totalization of history. However, within the vertical synthesis there are "horizontal syntheses" which are relatively autonomous from the vertical synthesis.[44] They allow us to study people and events both in their particularity and as integrated into the general movement of society.

The horizontal syntheses are, for example, sociology and psychoanalysis (though for Sartre this is to be an existentialist psychoanalysis which will avoid the mechanistic aspects of Freudian thought). They allow us to study mediations between the individual and society. They show how the individual concrete emerges from the background of the contradictions of capitalist society. Thus, for example, psychoanalysis will show how the child, as an irreducible existent, experiences his or her class, without fully understanding it, through the mediation of his or her family, and how this will affect the project of his or her life.[45]

Again we can see that the for-itself as an ontological freedom is still at the centre of society. The human

individual in the society of alienation is still faced with the responsibility of making choices in the project of life.

Sartre gives a very effective illustrative example of his notion that the individual lives the totality of society. This example sums up the thesis of SM. A coloured man was a member of an air-base ground crew on the outskirts of London.[46] He was prohibited by his colour from joining the flying personnel. However, he revolts against this by stealing an aeroplane and, with no experience as a pilot, flies it across the Channel eventually to be killed in France. Thus he chose a brief dazzling freedom, a freedom to die. Objectively, this event demonstrated the struggle between the colonized and the colonialists, and the fact that the colonized had not yet gone beyond the stage of individual acts of revolt. But subjectively, this event for the coloured man grew out of his recognition of the prohibition as a personal impoverishment. The event showed how the coloured man lived in the concrete the racist situation. Both aspects of the man's act made up a unity but at the same time they were irreducible to each other. They showed the "multi-dimensional unity of the act."[47]

Sartre's discussion of "comprehension" also shows that he retains the for-itself in his philosophy. In BN, as we saw earlier, Sartre argued that with the pre-reflective cogito the for-itself is continually conscious of existing and cannot step outside of this. In this sense, consciousness of existing is distinguished from the knowledge of an object outside of oneself. In SM, the concept of comprehension

applies these ideas to the human disciplines. Sartre says that the human being is "the existent which we are."[48] We therefore cannot approach human society as if it were an object entirely outside of us. We can understand other people and their products only because we are people ourselves with comprehension of human existence. We comprehend ourselves and others as human existents who project themselves from the present towards the future. Thus the dialectical totalization of knowledge is founded on "rational and comprehensive non-knowledge" and "the historical totalization will be possible only if anthropology understands itself instead of ignoring itself."[49] Existentialism, then, is integrated into Marxism as its very foundation.

In this light, we can see that Sartre is as far from determinism as ever. Sartre has not debunked the for-itself but has, rather, given us a practical extended pursuit of the for-itself's facticity and being-for-others by looking at how we live within a social context. He has shown how the for-itself of BN is situated in society.

However, Sartre does not stop there. We saw earlier how Sartre says that the human being can lose his or her enterprise in the totalization. The human being is an ontological freedom, a for-itself, situated in an alienating society with an absence of social freedom. But the human being is also the being of possibilities. To say what humanity is also to say what it can be and vice versa.[50] Importantly, for Sartre, humanity has the possibility of

liberating itself from the situation of alienation. This can come about through the Marxist project, according to Sartre: the proletariat and its allies as a group of "for-itselfs," if I can put it that way, uniting in the common aim of realizing the reign of (social) freedom. This will be the moment when "History" will have one meaning - from the people making it in common.[51] In this sense, we can view SM as Sartre's study of how the conscious human being or for-itself of BN is situated in society and also as his advocacy of how the for-itself should be engaged in action in society.

CONCLUSION

We human beings are bodily existents living in "the world" both as the natural environment around us and also as the social "milieu" in which we arise. But in that very living in the world we feel ourselves to be "experiencing centres." I began this work in search of a view of the human being (or an "anthropology" in its widest sense) which can study the human being without denying or trying to reduce to something else this conscious aspect of the human being.

I believe we can see how Sartre's philosophy, as developed from his early years through to the later period, can provide us with such a view. I have tried to show how Sartre takes a very balanced approach (contrary, perhaps, to popular conception). From his studies of consciousness and of how we as conscious existents "live" or "exist" our bodies, I drew out the conception in Sartre's philosophy of the human being as an integrated conscious bodily existent whose physical body (including the central nervous system etc.) is the ground upon which consciousness arises. Consciousness is made possible by our biological make-up but this does not have to entail identifying our conscious life as being identical to the firing of brain neurons. Sartre is not being extreme but simply accepting for examination <u>all</u> the evidence about the human existent, including our feeling of ourselves to be <u>experiencing</u> the world, an experience which in point of fact in our actual lives - even for the most hardened reductionist <u>theorist</u> - is something irreducible and remains with us, impervious to reductionist theory.

I said above that Sartre is not being extreme with such a position. There are other writers, even those conversant with neurophysiological findings etc., who do not accept that we need to reduce consciousness to being identical to the physical processes in the body without which it would not exist. For example, John Searle, in his interesting work on intentionality, operates with a conception of the processes of the brain as giving rise to the mental without there being a need to identify mental phenomena with something else and for him, the extreme is in attempting such an identification or reduction. Searle states that his view of mental states and events is "totally realistic":

> "... I think there really are such things as intrinsic mental phenomena which cannot be reduced to something else or eliminated by some kind of re-definition. There really are pains, tickles and itches, beliefs, fears, hopes, desires, perceptual experiences, experiences of acting, thoughts, feelings and all the rest. Now you might think that such a claim was so obviously true as to be hardly worth making, but the amazing thing is that it is routinely denied, though usually in a disguised form, by many, perhaps most, of the advanced thinkers who write on these topics."[1]

Searle concludes his work by noting the incompleteness of current neurophysiological knowledge. However, he speculates that:

> "if we come to understand the operation of the brain in producing Intentionality, it is likely to be on principles that are quite different from those we now employ, as different as the principles of quantum mechanics are from the principles of Newtonian mechanics; but any principles, to give us an adequate account of the brain, will have to recognize the reality of, and explain the causal capacities of, the Intentionality of the brain."[2]

Sartre, of course, does not delve in to that kind of biological detail but I believe we can see that Sartre's acceptance of our conscious experience as such and as arising from the lived body is a reasonable and balanced approach to take. Sartre's studies of the mental image and the emotions are concrete examples of how such a balanced approach can be used. Sartre with these examples shows how the human being as a unified conscious bodily existent brings into play the cognitive, affective and physical aspects of himself or herself all at once in meaningful experiences which, as experiences, defy reduction.

Sartre adopts a similar balance in approaching the social dimension of the human being. Human beings arise in a pre-existing societal context but it is each individual human being who makes the abstraction of the social situation real by living it. Sartre's position allows him to look at the complexities of the forces in society at a given era which set out the conditions within which we live but he can then come right back down to how an individual human being copes in his or her own way with that situation, living it in the particular.

Sartre's view of the irreducible conscious bodily existent or ontologically free human being who lives in the particular the general physical and social environment can be used as the reference point for all our investigations within the human disciplines. Operating from that kind of "anthropology" ensures that we do not "erase ourselves" from

the equation, which is the ultimate outcome of investigating ourselves using deterministic principles.

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2. Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method and the Meditations; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1968, Discourse 4, p. 53

3. This theory has been described by U.T. Place as "a widely accepted establishment view in contemporary philosophy." U.T. Place, "Thirty Years On - is Consciousness Still A Brain Process?", Australasian Journal of Philosophy, Vol. 66, No. 2, June 1988

4. D.M. Armstrong, A Materialist Theory of the Mind; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968

5. Ibid, p. 1

6. Ibid, p. 2

7. Ibid, p. 82. (Armstrong desribes the states of the brain as apt for bringing about a certain sort of behaviour so as to cater for situations where a state of the brain does not lead to any overt behaviour. E.g. seeing a magpie but being indifferent to it. This involves acquiring beliefs, themselves states of the brain, giving me the capacity for discriminatory behaviour, even though I do not enact such behaviour.)

8. Ibid, p. 83

9. Ibid, pp. 85 - 88

10. Ibid, p. 366

11. Skinner says that "it is the environment which acts upon the perceiving person, not the perceiving person who acts upon the environment." B.F. Skinner, Beyond Freedom and Dignity; New York, Knopfe, 1971, p. 188. Rather than there being any intermediary mind or consciousness, he argues that we simply feel "certain states of our bodies associated with behaviour" which are "by-products and not to mistaken for causes."

12. Armstrong, op. cit. pp. 78 - 79

13. Louis Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism" in For Marx; London: Penguin, 1969 and "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in Lenin and Philosophy; London: New Left Books, 1971

14. "It is," Althusser says, "impossible to know anything about men except on the absolute precondition that the philosophical (theoretical) myth of man is reduced to ashes." Althusser, For Marx, op. cit. p. 229. He also writes that history is "the process without a subject." Ibid, p. 70

15. Armstrong even admits that he could not translate every mental statement into a purely physical statement but puts this down to the general difficulty of solving philosophical problems. Armstrong, op. cit., pp. 84 - 85

16. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness; London: Methuen, 1969

17. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination; London: Methuen, 1972

18. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of The Emotions; London: Methuen, 1971

19. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit.

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1. Francis Jeanson makes a similar point. He argues that "the materialist ... cannot reduce consciousness to some material phenomenon without thereby exhibiting the ability of consciousness to think matter."
Francis Jeanson, Sartre and the Problem of Morality; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980.

2. Plato, The Republic; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin 1974.

3. Rene Descartes, Discourse on Method and the Meditations; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin 1968.

4. Ibid, Discourse 4 P. 53.

5. Or, in Descartes' exact words, "a substance of which the whole nature consists in thinking, and which, in order to exist, needs no place and depends on no material thing..."
Descartes, op. cit., Discourse 4 P. 54.

6. Descartes. op. cit., 3rd Meditation, p.131.

7. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding; Fontana/Collins, 1964.

8. Ibid, Bk.2, Chap.XXIII 15, P. 192.

9. George Berkeley, The Principles of Human Knowledge; London and Glasgow: Collins/Fontana, 1962

10. Locke, op. Cit., P.89 (Bk 2 Chap I,2)

11. Ibid, P.131 (Bk 2 Chap XI,17)

12. Ibid, p.134, (Bk 2 Chap XII,6)
13. David Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature 2nd edition, Oxford, 1978.

14. Ibid, P.1, (Bk 1 Pt 1 Section 1).

15. D.W. Hamlyn, Sensation and Perception; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961, P 116.

16. Ibid, p 120.

17. A.J. Ayer, The Foundations of Empirical Knowledge; London: Macmillan, 1940.

18. Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, London: Henry G. Bohn, 1855

19. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Structure of Behaviour; Boston: Beacon Press, 1967, p 124.

20. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays on Phenomenological Psychology, the Philosophy of Art, History and Politics: Northwestern University Press, USA, 1964, P13.

21. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p. 511

22. For a concise history of phenomenology see Herbert Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement, A Historical Introduction, vols 1 and 2, 2nd edition, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1976

23. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., pxxiv

24. Ibid, p. 621

25. Loc. cit.

26. Ibid, p. xliii

27. Ibid, p. 8

28. Ibid, p. xli

29. Ibid, p. xlii

30. Ibid, p. 3

31. Ibid, p. xxvii

32. loc. cit.

33. BN. p xxvviii

34. BN. p xxix

35. DM Armstrong, A Materialist Theory of the Mind: London; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

36. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. xxix

37. Ibid, p. xxx

38. Ibid p. xxxi

39. Ibid, p. xl

40. Ibid, p. xxx

41. Loc. cit.

42. Ibid, p. xxi

43. Ibid, p. xxii

44. Ibid, p. xxiii

45. Ibid, p. xxvi

46. Ibid, p. xxii

47. Ibid, p. xxvii

48. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit.

49. J-P S, Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, op. cit.

50. Ibid, .p xxxvi

51. Ibid, p. xxxvi

52. Ibid, p. xxxviii

53. Ibid, p. xxv

54. Ibid, p. xxxviii - xxxix

55. Ibid, p. xxxviii

56. Ibid, p. xxxix

57. Ibid, p. xxxiv

58. Ibid, p. xl

59. Ibid, p. xlii

60. St Anselm, "Proslogian," in John Hick, The Existence of God, New York, 1964, Macmillan.

61. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 273

62. Ibid, p. xxxvi

63. Ibid, p. xxvii

64. Ibid, p. 174

65. Ibid, p. 5

66. Ibid, p. 6

67. Ibid, p. 7

68. Loc. cit.

69. Ibid, p. 8

70. Ibid, p. 9

71. Loc. cit.

72. Loc. cit

73. Ibid, pp. 9 - 11

74. Ibid, p. 10

75. Ibid, p. 15

76. Ibid, p. 16

77. Ibid, p. xli

78. Ibid, p. 77

79. Ibid, p. 79

80. In this regard we should be wary of comparing, as Caws does, Sartre with Ryle. Caws says that Sartre has "a theory in some respects not unlike that of Ryle in The Concept of Mind, of the self as an object in the world among other objects, to be discovered in much the same way as other selves." Peter Caws, Sartre; London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979, P10. There is an essential difference, however. For Ryle the human is simply a being which happens to have certain dispositions to behaviour. The ridicules "ghost in the machine" positions since Descartes. Consciousness could be said to be nothing for Ryle in the literal sense that there is not any - the human is simply a behaving being. Hence the self is an object in the world. But for Sartre, consciousness has a distinct existence as the active negator. He insists that we must refer to consciousness in our study of the human being so that he criticizes Heidegger for talking of the Dasein as care and so on without reference to consciousness. The self is an object for Sartre in the different sense that consciousness actively produces its "self" and cannot be solidly identified with this object it produces.

81. Ibid, p. 23

82. Ibid, p. 20

83. Ibid, p. 21

84. Ibid, p. 22

85. Loc. cit.

86. Ibid, p. 16

87. Ibid, p. 11

88. Ibid, p. 21

89. Ibid, p. 21

90. Ibid, p. 74-75

91. Ibid, p. 90

92. Ibid, p. 73

93. Ibid, p. 76

94. Ibid, p. 74 - 75

95. Ibid, p. 77

96. Ibid, p. 76

97. Loc. cit.

98. Ibid, p. 102-105

99. Ibid, p. 103

100. J-P S., The Transcendence of the Ego; New York, Octogon, 1972.

101. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p. 103

102. Edmund Husserl, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology; Evanston: Northwestern Uni. Press, 1970

103. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p. 3

104. Ibid, p. 305

105. Ibid, p. 79

106. Loc. cit.

107. Ibid, p. 80

108. Ibid, p. 84

109. Descartes' second proof, to put it briefly, says that I am doubting therefore I am not perfect since to know is more perfect than to doubt. Yet I have an idea of perfection. I, an imperfect being, could not reach such an idea myself, it must have been given to me by a perfect being, God. Descartes, op. cit., Discourse 4, p. 55. We might reply to Descartes that an earthly account of the idea of perfection is in fact quite feasible: I act to achieve certain goals but sometimes I fail to achieve them. I am therefore made aware of my limitations. From this, I project towards an ideal state where I would be free from all limitation and failure, a state of perfection.

110. Ibid, p. 303

111. Loc. cit.

112. Ibid, p. 304

113. Loc. cit.

114. Ibid, p. 358

115. Ibid, p. 304

116. Ibid, p. 320

117. Ibid, p. 324

118. Ibid, p. 329

119. Ibid, p. 304

120. Ibid, p. 323

121. Loc. cit.

122. Ibid, p. 329

123. Ibid, p. 330

124. Loc. cit.

125. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of The Emotions, op. cit. p. 32

126. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit., p 92

127. Ibid, pp. 186 - 205

128. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of The Emotions, op. cit. p.63

129. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p. p. 314

130. Ibid, p. 113

131. Ibid, p. 309

132. Ibid, p. 315

133. Ibid, p. 317

134. Ibid, p. 319

135. Ibid, pp. 331 - 333

136. Ibid, p.322

137. Ibid, pp. 171-218

138. Ibid, p. 175

139. Ibid, p. 181

140. Loc. cit.

141. Ibid, p. 183

142. Loc. cit.

143. Ibid, p. 180

144. Ibid, p. 181

145. Loc. cit.

146. Ibid, p. 182

147. BN. p 193

148. G.W.F. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, trans by AV Miller; Oxford Uni. Press, 1977, (90-110) pp. 58 - 66

149. Ibid, p. 193

150. Ibid, p. 198

151. Ibid, p. 186

152. Ibid, p. 183

153. J-P.S., Nausea Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin 1965

154. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p.194

155. Francis Jeanson, Sartre and the Problem of Morality, op. cit., p 16

156. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 619

157. Ibid, p. 621

158. Ibid, p. 624

159. Ibid, p. 622

160. Ibid, p. 621

161. Ibid, p. 623

162. Loc. cit.

163. Indeed, since "consciousness" under such a view is just a physical complexity, it would be seen as logically possible to replicate consciousness in an alternative physical object, i.e. a computer or robot.

164. If the human being's physical body is capable of being the ground of consciousness then it should perhaps be theoretically possible to construct a computer or robot capable of achieving consciousness. All I will say here is that to construct such an entity as a truly conscious entity rather than a mechanically reacting machine, one would have to succeed in constructing it in its facticity as a ground of conscious unity. This conscious unity, though it would not be human, would itself then be more than a physical collection of circuits. It would be a new conscious life form

separate from its creator and its thoughts and conscious actions and so on would not be capable either of being translated into purely physical terms. The creation of such an entity would be an ethical as well a technical issue.

165. Hegel, op. cit.

166. Ibid, p. 259

167. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Structure of Behavior; Boston: Beacon 1967

168. Ibid, p. 133

169. Ibid, p. 102

170. Loc. cit.

171. Ibid, p. 126

172. Ibid, p. 175

173. Ibid, p. 102

174. Ibid, p. 1175

175. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit., p.206. There are in fact two occasions I can find in BN where Sartre mentions animals. In both cases he uses an animal example in passing to reinforce the point he is making about the conscious human being. This would seem to suggest that Sartre accepts animals as having some kind of basic "consciousness." The first occasion is the case of the insect we have already looked at in studying the chapter of BN on the body. The second occasion is when he discusses the human desire to appropriate things and the act of eating as a symbol of this. "Curiosity in an animal," he notes, "is always either sexual of alimentary. To know is to devour with the Eyes." Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 578

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1. Ibid, p.25
2. Loc. cit.
3. Ibid pp. 452 and 476
4. Ibid, p. 482
5. Ibid, pp. 25 - 46
6. See Intro. ref. 11
7. Loc. cit.
8. See Intro. ref. 14
9. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p.482
10 Ibid, p.482
11. Loc. cit.
12. Ibid, p.483
13. Loc. cit.
14. Loc. cit.
15. Ibid, p.486
16. Jean Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract and Discourses, London: Dent, 1973, p.177
17. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit. p. 485
18. Ibid, p. 486
19. Ibid, p. 488
20. Ibid, p. 487
21. Ibid, p. 28
22. Ibid, p. 433
23. Loc. cit.
24. Ibid, p. 435
25. Ibid, p. 435 R.D. Laing, the late Scottish psychiatrist, commends Sartre's discussion of this point. As Laing expresses it: "if one experiences the other as a free agent, one is open to the possibility of experiencing oneself as an object of his experience and thereby of feeling one's own subjectivity drained away. One is threatened with the possibilty of becoming no more than a thing in

the world of the other, without any life for oneself, without any being for oneself. In terms of such anxiety, the very act of experiencing the other as a person is felt as virtually suicidal." R.D. Laing The Divided Self, Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1965.

26. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p.436

27. Ibid, pp. 435 - 436

28. Ibid, p. 438

29. Ibid, p. 435

30. Loc. cit.

31. Ibid, p. 449

32. Ibid, p. 448

33. Ibid, p. 451

34. Ibid, p. 403

35. Ibid, p. 438

36. Ibid, p. 439

37. Ibid, p. 29

38. Loc. cit.

39. Ibid, pp. 32 - 33

40. Ibid, p. 33

41. Loc. cit.

42. Loc. cit.

43. Ibid, pp. 33 - 34

44. Ibid, p.34

45. Ibid, p. 40 We may recall here R.D. Laing's view of theory. "Theory," he writes, "can only legitimately be made on behalf of experience, not in order to deny experience which the theory ignores out of embarrassment." R.D. Laing, Self and Others; London: Penguin, 1969, p.75

46. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 35

47. Ibid, p. 39

48. Ibid, p. 36

49. Ibid, p. 38

50. Ibid, p. 39

51. Loc. cit.

52. Ibid, p. 38

53. Loc. cit.

54. Ibid, p. 39

55. Ibid, p. 626

56. Ibid, p. 44

57. Ibid, p. 56 R.D. Laing describes "bad faith" in his own way. He writes that: "Between...'truth' and a lie there is room for the most curious and subtle ambiguities and complexities in the person's disclosure or concealment of himself...The liar deceives others without deceiving himself. The hysteric's deception of himself is anterior to his deception of others." R.D. Laing, Self and Others, op. cit., p.129

58. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p. 50

59. Ibid, pp. 55 - 56

60. Ibid, p. 55

61. Ibid, pp. 59 - 60

62. Ibid, p. 59

63. Ibid, p. 438

64 Ibid, p. 120

65. Ibid, p. 108

66. Ibid, p. 109

67. Ibid, p. 124

68. Ibid, p. 121

69. Ibid, p. 138

70. Ibid, p. 139

71. Ibid, p. 138

72. Ibid, p. 116

73. Ibid, p. 141

74. Ibid, p. 125

76. Ibid, p. 128

77. Ibid, p. 142

78. Ibid, p. 204

79. Ibid, p. 206

80. Loc. cit.

81. Ibid, p. 114

82. Ibid, p. 128

83. Ibid, p. 137

84. Ibid, p. 136

85. Ibid, p. 147

86. Ibid, p. 112

87. Ibid, p.129

88. Ibid, p. 155

89. Ibid, p. 159

90. Ibid, p. 155

91. Ibid, p. 160

92. Ibid, p. 161

93. Ibid, p. 151 (see translator's footnote)

94. Ibid, p. 154

95. Loc cit.

96. Ibid, p. 155

96. Loc. cit.

97. Ibid, p. 159

98. Ibid, p. 161

99. BN, p.160

100. Ibid, pp. 159 - 160

101. Ibid, p. 170

102. Ibid, p. 452 Francis Jeanson's work shows how Sartre was early on criticized for what was seen as a view of freedom as a baseless amoral spontaneity. See Francis Jeanson, Sartre and the Problem of Morality, op. cit., p.21

103. Ibid, pp. 453 - 454

104. Ibid, p. 457

105. Ibid, p. 458

106. Ibid, p. 459

107. Ibid, p. 455

108. Loc. cit.

109. Ibid, p. 476

110. Loc. cit.

111. Ibid, p. 458

112. Loc. cit.

113. Ibid, p. 48. In a similar vein, R.D. Laing notes that "Hitler is reputed to have stated that he never deprived anyone of freedom, only of liberty." He adds that: "A prisoner in a cage could be supposed to retain his 'freedom', but to have lost his liberty." R.D. Laing, Self and Others, op. cit. p.155

114. Ibid, p. 458

115. Loc. cit.

116. Loc. cit.

117. Ibid, p. 574

118. Ibid, p. 480

119. Ibid, p. 455

120. Ibid, p. 457

121. Loc. cit.

122. Ibid, p. 460

123. Ibid, pp. 455 - 457

124. Ibid, p. 457

125. Ibid, p. 464

126. Loc. cit.

127. Ibid, pp. 461 - 462

128. Ibid, pp. 462 - 463

129. Ibid, p. 459

130. Loc. cit.

131. Ibid, p. 462

132. Loc. cit.

133. Loc. cit.

134. Ibid, p. 461

135. Loc. cit.

136. Ibid, p. 463

137. Ibid, p. 464

138. Loc. cit.

139. Loc. cit.

140. Loc. cit.

141. Loc. cit.

142. Ibid, p. 465

143. Loc. cit.

144. Ibid, p. 467

145. Loc. cit.

146. Ibid, p. 466

147. Ibid, p. 467

148. Ibid, p. 476

149. Ibid, p. 472

150. Loc. cit.

151. Loc. cit.

152. Loc. cit.

153. Ibid, p. 474

154. Ibid, pp. 563 - 564

155. Ibid, p. 470

156. Loc. cit.

157. Loc. cit.

158. Loc. cit.

159. Ibid, p. 569

160. Ibid, p. 498

161. Loc. cit.

162. Ibid, p. 541

163. Ibid, p. 570

164. Ibid, pp. 570 - 571

165. Ibid, p. 475

166. Ibid, p. 570

167. Ibid, p. 574

168. For a discussion of how existentialist principles can be applied in the field of psychiatry, see the works of R.D. Laing such as The Divided Self, op. cit. Sartre himself, in fact, explicitly commended Laing's "existentialist" psychiatry in a preface he wrote for Laing's book on Sartre. Sartre says he is "convinced" that Laing's efforts "contribute to bringing us closer to the times when psychiatry will be, at last, human." See R.D. Laing and D.G. Cooper, Reason and Violence, A Decade of Sartre's Philosophy, 1950 - 1960; London: Tavistock, 1964.

169. Ibid, p. 565

170. Ibid, p. 566

171. Ibid, p. 615

172. Ibid, p. 566

173. Ibid, p. 566

174. Ibid, p. 615

175. Ibid, pp. 564 - 565

176. Ibid, p. 101

177. Ibid, p. 128

178. Ibid, p. 102

179. Ibid, p. 90 (For the original Hegelian version of the "Unhappy Consciousness," see G.W.F. Hegel, The Phenomenoloy of Spirit, Oxford: OUP, 1977, p.126,(#206))

180. Ibid, p. 90

181. Ibid, p. 89

182. Ibid, p. 568

183. Ibid, p. 626

184. Ibid, p. 627

185. Ibid, pp. 627 - 628

186. Ibid, p. 531

187. Ibid, p. 548

188. Ibid, p. 546

189. Ibid, p. 538

190. Ibid, p. 533

191. Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," in Marx, Early Writings; London: Pelican, 1975, pp. 328 - 330

192. Ibid, p. 554

193. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit.

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1. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit.

2. H.E. Barnes, Introduction to Search for a Method, op. cit., p.vii

3. Descartes, op. cit., "Third Meditation," p.131

4. Ibid, p. 253

5. Ibid, p. 254

6. Ibid, p. 256

7. Ibid, p. 273

8. Ibid, p. 252

9. Ibid, p. 259

10. Ibid, p. 270

11. Ibid, p. 222

12. Ibid, p. 258

13. Ibid, pp. 257 - 258

14. Ibid, p. 271

15. Ibid, p. 251

16. Ibid, p. 280

17. Ibid, p. 277

18. Ibid, p. 277

19. Ibid, p. 277

20. Ibid, p. pp. 279 - 280

21. Ibid, p. 279

22. Ibid, p. 289

23. Ibid, p. 260

24. Ibid, p. 261

25. Ibid, p. 261

26. Ibid, p. 262

27. Ibid, p. 267

28. Ibid, p. 263

29. Ibid, p. 263

30. Ibid, p. 264

31. BN, p.294. R.D. Laing expresses the same point when he writes that: "If I want to get to know you, it is unlikely that I shall if I proceed as though I were studying nebulae or rats .... If one says that all one is interested in is the study of behaviour 'pure and simple', then one is not studying persons." Self and Others, op. cit.

32. Ibid, p. 297

33. Ibid, p. 282

34. Ibid, p. 283

35. Ibid, p. 285

36. Ibid, p. 297

37. Ibid, p. 301

38. Ibid, p. 299

39. Ibid, p. 302

40. Ibid, p. 362

41. Ibid, p. 363

42. Ibid, p. 406

43. Ibid, pp.406 - 407

44. Ibid, pp.364 - 377

45. Ibid, pp.382 - 398

46. Ibid, p. 386

47. Ibid, p. 410

48. Ibid, p. 409

49. Ibid, p. 412

50. Ibid, p.413 R.D. Laing also follows this line of thinking. He speaks of "the inexorable separateness between man and man, that no love, nor the most complete experience of union, completely or permanently annuls." Self and Others, op. cit. p.130

51. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, op. cit., p.247

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1. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit.

2. Ibid, p. vii

3. Loc. cit.

4. Daniel C. Dennett, "Two Approaches to Mental Images" in Brainstorms; Hassocks, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1978

5. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit., p.92

6. Dennett, op. cit., p. 175

7. Ibid, p. 179

8. Loc. cit.

9. Ibid, p. 184

10. Ibid, p. 181

11. Ibid, p. 182

12. Ibid, p. 186

13. Loc. cit.

14. Loc. cit.

15. Loc. cit.

16. Ibid, p. 187

17. Loc. cit.

18. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit., p. 2

19 Ibid, p. 1

20. Loc. cit.

21. Loc. cit.

22. Ibid, p. 2

23. Loc. cit.

24. Loc. cit.

25. Ibid, p. 5

26. Loc. cit.

27. This is very similar to Merleau-Ponty's description of perception which we looked at briefly in Chapter 1. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays..., op. cit., p. 13

28. Jean-Paul Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination, op. cit., p. 9

29. Ibid, p. 6

30. Ibid, p. 8

31. Ibid, p. 6

32. Ibid, p. 8

33. Ibid, p. 7

34. Ibid, p. 10

35. Ibid, p. 12

36. Ibid, p. 12

37. Ibid, p. 13

38. Ibid, p. 14

39. Ibid, p. 16

40. Ibid, p. 17

41. Ibid, p. 18

42. Ibid, p. 16

43. Ibid, p. 20

44. Ibid, pp. 21 - 26

45. Ibid, pp. 26 - 32

46. Ibid, pp. 32 - 39

47. Ibid, pp. 39 - 41

48. Ibid, pp. 41 - 57

49. Ibid, p.60

50. Ibid, p.63

51. Ibid, p. 70

52. Ibid, p. 75

53. Ibid, pp. 79 - 80

54. Ibid, p. 81

55. Ibid, p. 92

56. Ibid, p. 106

57. Ibid, p. 105

58. Ibid, p. 101

59. Ibid, p. 111

60. Ibid, p. 110

61. Ibid, p. 207

62. Loc. cit.

63. Loc. cit.

64. Ibid, p. 209

65. Ibid, p. 210

66. Ibid, p. 213

67. Ibid, p. 216

68. Ibid, pp. 214 - 215

69. Ibid, p. 214

70. Ibid, p. 215

71. Ibid, p. 213

72. Ibid, p. 212

73. Ibid, p. 216

74. Ibid, p. 217

75. Ibid, pp. 217 - 218

76. Ibid, p. 218

77. This idea of Sartre's find its extreme expression in his view of beauty in a discussion of the work of art tagged on at the end of the conclusion. He says that the real is never beautiful. If I look at an object and am struck by its beauty, I am making it an "analogue of itself." This seems to me a very tortuous way of describing beauty. I would argue that one's activity is towards the real object which one regards as beautiful. One's affectivity is involved, yes, but it goes to the real object. Ibid, pp. 219 - 225

REFERENCES - CHAPTER FIVE

1. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, op. cit.
2. Ibid, p. 15 and p. 24
3. Ibid, p. 93
4. Ibid, p. 94
5. Ibid, p. 77
6. Ibid, p. 14
7. Ibid, p. 21
8. Ibid, p. 16
9. Ibid, p. 32
10. Ibid, p. 36 and p. 40
11. Ibid, p. 41
12. Ibid, p. 47
13. Ibid, p. 50
14. Loc. cit.
15. Ibid, p. 54
16. Ibid, p. 55
17. Ibid, pp. 61 - 62 (my emphasis)
18. Ibid, p. 62
19. Loc. cit.
20. Loc. cit.
21. Ibid, p. 66
22. Ibid, p. 65
23. Ibid, p. 66
24. Loc. cit.
25. Loc. cit.
26. Ibid, p. 68
27. Loc. cit.
28. Loc. cit.
29. Ibid, p. 69

30. Loc. cit.

31. Ibid, p.70

32. Ibid, p. 71

33. Ibid, p. 45

34. Ibid, p. 46

35. Ibid, pp. 71 - 72

36. Ibid, p. 84

37. Ibid, p. 74

38. Ibid, p. 76

39. Loc. cit.

40. Ibid, p. 76

41. Ibid, p. 77

42. Loc. cit.

43. Ibid, p. 78

44. Loc. cit.

45. Loc. cit.

46. Loc. cit.

47. Ibid, p. 80

48. Ibid, p. 81

49. Ronald Aronson, Jean-Paul Sartre - Philosophy in The World; London: Verso, 1980

50. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, op. cit., p. 22

51. Aronson, op. cit.

52. Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, op. cit., p. 62

53. Ibid, p. 28

54. Ibid, p.71

55. Ibid, p. 93

56. Ibid, p. 83

57. Loc. cit.

58. Ibid, p. 74

59. Ibid, p. 51

60. Herbert Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement, Volume II; The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976

61. Jean-Paul Sartre, Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions, op. cit., p. 79

62. Ibid, p. 91

63. Ibid, p. 85

64. Loc. cit.

REFERENCES - CHAPTER SIX

1. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit. (I have used an American edition. I have reverted to British-style spelling in all quotations. The work is also distributed in an alternative edition under the title of "The Problem of Method.")

2. CDR 1 & 2

3. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit., p. 3

4. Ibid, p. 7

5. Ibid, p. xxxiv

6. Ibid, p. 8

7. Ibid, p. 20

8. Loc. cit.

9. Ibid, p. 18

10. Ibid, p. 34

11. We have to bear in mind, of course, that there is an on-going debate amongst students of Marx between those who believe there was only "one Marx," i.e. he retained a "humanist" element in his thought even while writing his more mature works which set out his view of dialectical materialism, and those who support the "two Marxes" thesis which sees a break between the early humanist Marx of the Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts (which I quoted earlier) and the later non-humanist "scientific" Marx. Sartre, as we would expect, sides with the humanist idea of Marx. In my view, Marx only makes sense within some kind of humanist aspect. Only a creative human existent can come to a view of himself or herself as oppressed. In this regard, there is an interesting work by David McLellan showing how Marx, with the concept of "alienated labour," retains a humanist concern in his later Grundrisse, a massive collection of notes written by Marx over 15 years in preparation for a large project of which Capital was to be only a part. McLellan also points to the use of the concept in the latter work. Cf. David McLellan, Marx's Grundrisse; St. Alban's, Herts: Paladin, 1973, Karl Marx, Grundrisse; Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1973 and Karl Marx, Capital; London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1974. Althusser, whom we looked at earlier, takes the opposite approach to Marx from Sartre in that he (Althusser) supports the "two Marxes" thesis and favours a non-humanist "scientific" Marx.

12. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit., p. 13

13. Ibid, p. 14

14. Ibid, p. 13

15. Sartre here takes the opposite kind of approach regarding the "failures" of Marxism to that of Camus or Merleau-Ponty. Sartre wishes to reform Marxism as currently practised. Camus sees rebellion or revolution as containing the seeds of its own downfall in resulting in a new establishment or regime which ends up being repressive. Cf. Albert Camus, The Rebel; Harmodsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1971. Merleau-Ponty refuses to let Marxism as a theory off the hook for its repressive mistakes in practice. He believes its mistakes in practice mean its critique is faulty. Cf. Maurice Merleau- Ponty, The Adventures of the Dialectic; London: Heinemann, 1974.

16. Anthony Manser has identified the full quotation from The 18th Brumaire ... It reads as follows: "Men make their own history but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations lies like a nightmare on the brain of the living." Cf. Anthony Manser's article, "Praxis and Dialectic in Sartre's Critique" in Mary Warnock (ed.), Sartre, A Collection of Critical Essays; Garden City, New York: Anchor books, Doubleday and Co. Inc., 1971.

17. Jean-Paul Sartre, Search for a Method, op. cit., p. 43

18. Ibid, p. iii

19. Ibid, p. 68

20. Ibid, p. 69

21. Ibid, p. 91

22. Loc. cit.

23. Ibid, p. 151

24. Loc. cit.

25. Ibid, p. 145

26. Ibid, p. 155

27. Ibid, p. 77

28. Ibid, p. 76

29. Ibid, p. 78

30. Ibid, pp. 132 - 133

31. Ibid, p. 77

32. Ibid, p. 65

33. Ibid, p. 127

34. Ibid, p. 95

35. Ibid, p. 78

36. Ibid, p. 87

37. Ibid, p. 88

38. Ibid, p. 91

39. Ibid, p. 93

40. Ibid, p. 76

41. Ibid, p. 152

42. Ibid, p. 50

43. Ibid, p. 135

44. Ibid, p. 80

45. Ibid, pp. 57 - 60

46. Ibid, pp. 95 - 96 and p. 108

47. Ibid, p. 111

48. Ibid, p. 168

49. Ibid, p. 174

50. Ibid, p. 93

51. Ibid, p. 90

REFERENCES - CONCLUSION

1. John Searle, Intentionality, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 262

2. Ibid, p. 272